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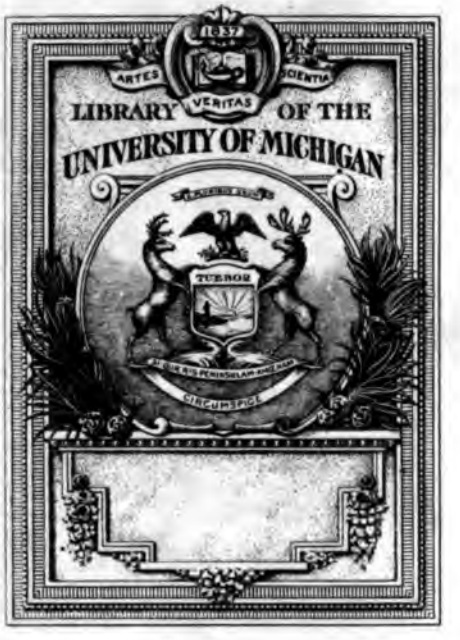
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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN DONNE, D.D.,

DEAN OF SAINT PAUL'S,

1621—1631.

WITH A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.

BY

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SERMONS.

SERMON CXIV.

PREACHED AT DENMARK HOUSE,

SOME FEW DAYS BEFORE THE BODY OF KING JAMES WAS REMOVED FROM THENCE, TO HIS BURIAL, APRIL 26, 1625 [1].

CANTICLES iii. 11.

Go forth ye daughters of Sion, and behold King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

IN the creation of man, in that one word, *Faciamus, Let us make man*, God gave such an intimation of the Trinity, as that we may well enlarge, and spread, and paraphrase that one word, so far, as to hear therein, a council of all the three persons, agreeing in this gracious design upon man, *Faciamus*, Let us make him; make him, and mend him, and make him sure: I, the Father, will make him by my power; if he should fall, thou the Son shalt repair him, re-edify him, redeem him; if he should distrust that this redemption belonged not to him, thou, the Holy Ghost, shalt apply to his particular soul, and conscience, this mercy of mine, and this merit of the Son's; and so let us make him. In our text there is an intimation of another Trinity. The words are spoken but by one, but the persons in the text are three; for first, the speaker, the director of all, is the church, the spouse of Christ, she says, *Go forth ye daughters of Sion;* and then the persons that are called up, are, as you see, the daughters of Sion, the obedient children of the church, that hearken to her voice: and then lastly, the persons upon whom they are directed, is Solomon crowned, that is, Christ invested with the royal dignity

[1] The king died March 27.

of being head of the church; and in this, especially, is this appliable to the occasion of our present meeting (all our meetings now, are, to confess to the glory of God, and the rectifying of our own consciences, and manners, the uncertainty of the prosperity, and the assuredness of the adversity of this world) that this crown of Solomon's in the text, will appear to be Christ's crown of thorns, his humiliation, his passion; and so these words will dismiss us in this blessed consolation, that then we are nearest to our crown of glory, when we are in tribulation in this world, and then enter into full possession of it, when we come to our dissolution and transmigration out of this world: and these three persons, the church that calls, the children that hearken, and Christ in his humiliation, to whom they are sent, will be the three parts, in which we shall determine this exercise.

First then, the person that directs us, is the church; *no man hath seen God*, and lives; but no man lives till he have heard God; for God spake to him, in his baptism, and called him by his name, then. Now, as it were a contempt in the king's house, for any servant to refuse anything, except he might hear the king in person command it, when the king hath already so established the government of his house, as that his commandments are to be signified by his great officers: so neither are we to look that God should speak to us mouth to mouth, spirit to spirit, by inspiration, by revelation, for it is a large mercy, that he hath constituted an office, and established a church, in which we should hear him. When Christ was baptized by John, it is said by all those three evangelists, that report that story, in particular circumstances, that *there was a voice heard from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased:* and it is not added in any of those three evangelists, that that voice added, hear him: for, after that declaration, that he, who was visibly and personally come amongst them, was the Son of God, there was no reason to doubt of men's willingness to hear him, who went forth in person, to preach unto them, in this world; as long as he was to stay with them, it was not likely that they should need provocation, to hear him, therefore that was not added at his baptism, and entrance into his personal ministry: but when Christ came to his transfiguration, which was a mani-

festation of his glory, in the next world, and an intimation of the approaching of the time of his going away, to the possession of that glory, out of this world, there that voice from heaven says, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him*[1]: when he was gone out of this world, men needed a more particular solicitation to hear him; for how, and where, and in whom should they hear him, when he was gone? In the church, for the same testimony that God gave of Christ, to authorize and justify his preaching, hath Christ given of the church, to justify her power: the Holy Ghost fell upon Christ, at his baptism, and the Holy Ghost fell upon the apostles, (who were the representative church) at Whitsuntide: the Holy Ghost tarried upon Christ then, and the Holy Ghost shall tarry with the church, *usque ad consummationem*, till the end of the world. And therefore, as we have that institution from Christ, *dic ecclesiæ*, when men are refractory and perverse, to complain to the church, so have they who are complained of to the church, that institution from Christ also, *audi ecclesiam*, hearken to the voice of God, in the church; and they have from him that commination, If you disobey them, you disobey God; in what fetters soever they bind you, you shall rise bound in those fetters; and, as he who is excommunicated in one diocese, should not be received in another; so let no man presume of a better state, in the Triumphant church, than he holds in the Militant, or hope for communion there, that despises excommunication here. That which the Scripture says, God says, (says St. Augustine) for the Scripture is his word; and that which the church says, the Scriptures say, for she is their word, they speak in her; they authorize her, and she explicates them; the Spirit of God inanimates the Scriptures, and makes them his Scriptures, the church actuates the Scriptures, and makes them our Scriptures: *Nihil salubrius*, says the same father, There is not so wholesome a thing, no soul can live in so good an air, and in so good a diet, *Quam ut rationem præcedat authoritas*, Then still to submit a man's own particular reason, to the authority of the church expressed in the Scriptures: for, certainly it is very truly (as it is very usefully) said by Calvin, *Semper nimia morositas, est ambitiosa*, A frowardness, and an

[1] Matt. xvii. 5.

aptness to quarrel at the proceedings of the church, and to be delivered from the obligations, and constitutions of the church, is ever accompanied with an ambitious pride, that they might enjoy a licentious liberty; it is not because the church doth truly take too much power, but because they would be under none; it is an ambition, to have all government in their own hands, and to be absolute emperors of themselves, that makes them refractory: but, if they will pretend to believe in God, they must believe in God so, as God hath manifested himself to them, they must believe in Christ; so if they will pretend to hear Christ, they must hear him there, where he hath promised to speak, they must hear him in the church.

The first reason then in this Trinity, the person that directs, is the church; the trumpet in which God sounds his judgments, and the organ in which he delivers his mercy; and then the persons of the second place, the persons to whom the church speaks here, are *filiæ Sion, The daughters of Sion, her own daughters.* We are not called *filii ecclesiæ*, sons of the church: the name of sons may imply more virility, more manhood, more sense of our own strength, than becomes them, who profess an obedience to the church: therefore, as by a name, importing more facility, more suppleness, more application, more tractableness, she calls her children daughters. But then, being a mother, and having the dignity of a parent upon her, she does not proceed supplicatorily, she does not pray them, nor intreat them, she does not say, I would you would go forth, and I would you would look out, but it is *egredimini, et videte*, imperatively, authoritatively, do it, you must do it: so that she shows what, in important and necessary cases, the power of the church is, though her ordinary proceedings, by us and our ministry be, to pray you, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. In your baptism, your souls became daughters of the church; and they must continue so, as long as they continue in you; you cannot divest your allegiance to the church, though you would; no more than you can to the state, to whom you cannot say, I will be no subject. A father may disinherit his son upon reasons, but even that disinherited child cannot renounce his father. That church which conceived thee in the covenant of God, made to Christians

and their seed, and brought thee forth in baptism, and brought thee up in catechizing, and preaching, may yet, for thy misdemeanour to God in her, separate thee, *à mensa et toro*, from bed and board; from that sanctuary of the soul, the communion table, and from that sanctuary of the body, Christian burial, and even that Christian burial gives a man a good rise, a good help, a good advantage, even at the last resurrection, to be laid down in expectation of the resurrection, in holy ground, and in a place accustomed to God's presence, and to have been found worthy of that communion of saints, in the very body, is some earnest, and some kind of first-fruits of the joyful resurrection, which we attend: God can call our dead bodies from the sea, and from the fire, and from the air, for every element is his; but consecrated ground is our element. And therefore, you daughters of Sion, holy and religious souls, (for to them only this indulgent mother speaks here) hearken ever to her voice; quarrel not[3] with your mother's honour, nor her discretion: despise not her person, nor her apparel; do not say, she is not the same woman she was heretofore, nor that she is not so well dressed as she was then; dispute not her doctrine, dispise not her discipline; that as you sucked her breasts in your baptism, and in the other sacrament, when you entered, and whilst you stayed in this life, so you may lie in her bosom, when you go out of it. Hear her; and a good part of that which you are to hear from her, is involved and enwrapped in that which we have proposed to you for our third part, *Go forth, and behold Solomon*, &c.

Here are two duties enjoined; at least two steps, two degrees; *egredimini*, *go forth*, and then, *videte*, *behold*, contemplate; and, after the duty, or wrapped in the duty, we have the object which we are to look upon, and in that, divers things to be considered; as we shall see in their order. First, when we are bid to go forth, it is not to go so far, as out of that church, in which God hath given us our station; for, as Moses says, That *the word of God is not beyond sea;* so the church of God is not so beyond sea as that we must needs seek it there, either in a painted church, on one side, or in a naked church, on another; a church in a dropsy, overflown with ceremonies, or a church in a consumption,

[3] Folio Edition, "Quarrel not your mother's honour."

for want of such ceremonies, as the primitive church found useful, and beneficial for the advancing of the glory of God, and the devotion of the congregation. That which Christ says to the church itself, the church says to every soul in the church: *Go thy way forth, by the footsteps of the flock*[4]; associate thyself to the true shepherd, and true sheep of Christ Jesus, and stray not towards idolatrous chapels, nor towards schismatical conventicles, *but go by the footsteps of the flock;* there must be footsteps, some must have gone that way before, take heed of opinions, that begin in thyself; and the whole flock must have gone that way, take heed of opinions vented by a few new men, which have not had the establishment of a church. And truly the best way to discern footsteps, is Daniel's way, Daniel's way was to strew ashes, and so their footsteps that had been there were easily discerned: walk in thine own ashes, in the meditation of thine own death, or in the ashes of God's saints, who are dead before thee, in the contemplation of their example, and thou wilt see some footsteps of the flock, some impressions, some directions, how they went, and how thou art to follow, to the heavenly Jerusalem. In conversing evermore with them which tread upon carpets, or upon marbles, thou shalt see no footsteps, carpets and marbles receive no impressions; amongst them that tread in ashes, in the ways of holy sorrow, and religious humiliation, thou shalt have the way best marked out unto thee. Go forth, that is, go farther than thyself, out of thyself; at least out of the love of thyself, for that is but a short, a giddy, a vertiginous walk; how little a thing is the greatest man! If thou have many rooms in thyself, many capacities to contemplate thyself in, if thou walk over the consideration of thyself, as thou hast such a title of honour, such an office of command, such an inheritance, such a pedigree, such a posterity, such an alliance, if this be not a short walk, yet it is a round walk, a giddy, a vertiginous proceeding. Get beyond thine own circle; consider thyself at thine end, at thy death, and then *egredere*, go farther than that, go forth and see what thou shalt be after thy death.

Still that which we are to look upon, is especially ourselves, but it is ourselves, enlarged and extended into the next world;

[4] Cant. i. 8.

for till we see what we shall be then, we are but short sighted. Wouldst thou say, thou knewest a man, because thou hadst seen him in his cradle? No more canst thou be said to have known thyself, because thou knowest the titles and additions which thou hast received in this word; for all those things which we have here, are but swaddling clouts, and all our motions and preferments, from place to place, are but the rocking of a cradle. The first thing that Christ says to his spouse in the Canticles, is, *If thou know not thyself*[5], (for so all the ancients read it, and so the original bears it) *If thou know not thyself, O thou fairest of women;* she might know that she was the fairest of women, and yet not know herself; thou mayest know that thou art the happiest of men, in this world, and yet not know thyself. All this life is but a preface, or but an index and repertory to the book of life; there, at that book begins thy study; to grow perfect in that book, to be daily conversant in that book, to find what be the marks of them, whose names are written in that book, and to find those marks, ingenuously, and in a rectified conscience, in thyself, to find that no murmuring at God's corrections, no disappointing of thy hopes, no interrupting of thy expectations, no frustrating of thy possibilities in the way, no impatience in sickness, and in the agony of death, can deface those marks, this is to go forth, and see thyself beyond thyself, to see what thou shalt be in the next world. Now we cannot see our own face without a glass: and therefore in the old temple, *in or about that laver of brass*, where the water for the uses of the church was reserved, Moses appointed looking-glasses to be placed[6]; that so, at the entering into the temple, men might see themselves, and make use of that water, if they had contracted any foulness in any part about them. Here, at your coming hither now, you have two glasses, wherein you may see yourselves from head to foot; one in the text, your head, Christ Jesus, represented unto you, in the name and person of Solomon, *Behold King Solomon crowned*, &c. And another, under your feet, in the dissolution of this great monarch, our royal master, now laid lower by death than any of us, his subjects and servants.

[5] Cant. i. 8. [6] Exod. xxxviii. 8.

First then, behold yourselves in that first glass, *Behold King Solomon;* Solomon the son of David, but not the son of Bathsheba, but of a better mother, the most blessed Virgin Mary. For, Solomon, in this text, is not a proper name, but an appellative; a significative word: Solomon is *pacificus*, the peace-maker, and our peace is made in, and by Christ Jesus: and he is that Solomon, whom we are called upon to see here. Now, as St. Paul says, that *He would know nothing but Christ*, (that is his first abridgment) and then he would know nothing of Christ, but him crucified, (and that is the re-abridgment) so we seek no other glass, to see ourselves in, but Christ, nor any other thing in this glass, but his humiliation. What need we? Even that, his lowest humiliation, his death, is expressed here, in three words of exaltation, it is a crown, it is a marriage, it is the gladness of heart: *Behold King Solomon crowned*, &c.

The crown, which we are called to see him crowned with, his mother put upon him; the crown which his Father gave him, was that glory, wherewith he was glorified, with the Father, from all eternity, in his divine nature: and the crown wherewith his Father crowned his human nature, was the glory given to that, in his ascension. His mother could give him no such crown; she herself had no crown, but that, which he gave her. The crown that she gave him, was that substance, that he received from her, our flesh, our nature, our humanity, and this, Athanasius, and this, St. Ambrose, calls the crown, wherewith his mother crowned him, in this text, his infirm, his human nature. Or, the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, was that crown, to which, that infirm nature which he took from her, submitted him, which was his passion, his crown of thorns; for so Tertullian, and divers others take this crown of his, from her, to be his crown of thorns: *Woe to the crown of pride, whose beauty is a fading flower*, says the prophet[7]; but blessed be this crown of humiliation, whose flower cannot fade. Then was there truly a rose amongst thorns, when through his crown of thorns, you might see his title, Jesus Nazarenus: for, in that very name, Nazarenus, is involved the signification of a flower; the very word signifies a flower. Esay's flower in the crown of pride fades, and is removed; this flower

[7] Isaiah xxviii. 1.

in the crown of thorns fades not, nor could be removed: for, for all the importunity of the Jews, Pilate would not suffer that title to be removed, or to be changed; still Nazarenus remained, and still a rose amongst thorns. You know the curse of the earth, *Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee*[8]; it did so to our Solomon here, it brought forth thorns to Christ, and he made a crown of those thorns, not only for himself, but for us too, *Omnes aculei mortis, in dominici corporis tolerantia, obtusi sunt*[9], All the thorns of life and death, are broken, or blunted upon the head of our Solomon, and now, even our thorns, make up our crown, our tribulation in life, our dissolution in death, conduce to our glory: *Behold him crowned with his mother's crown*, for even that brought him to his Father's crown, his humiliation to exaltation, his passion to glory.

Behold your Solomon, your Saviour again, and you shall see another beam of comfort, in your tribulations from his; for even this humiliation of his, is called his espousals, his marriage, *Behold him crowned in the day of his espousals.* His spouse is the church, his marriage is the uniting of himself to this spouse, in his becoming head of the church. The great city, the heavenly Jerusalem, is called the bride, and the Lamb's wife, in the Revelation[10]: and he is the head of this body, the bridegroom of this bride, the head of this church, as he is the first born of the dead; death, that dissolves all ours, made up this marriage. His death is his marriage, and upon his death flowed out from his side, those two elements of the church, water and blood; the sacraments of baptism, and of the communion of himself. Behold then this Solomon crowned and married; both words of exaltation and exultation, and both by death; and trust him for working the same effects upon thee; that thou (though by death) shall be crowned with a crown of glory, and married to him, in whose right and merit thou shalt have that crown.

And behold him once again, and you shall not see a beam, but a stream of comfort; for this day, which is the day of his death, he calls here *The day of the gladness of his heart. Behold him crowned in the day of the gladness of his heart.* The fulness, the

[8] Gen. iii. 18. [9] Tertullian. [10] Rev. xxi. 19.

compass, the two hemispheres of heaven, are often designed to us, in these two names, joy and glory: If the cross of Christ, the death of Christ, present us both these, how near doth it bring, how fully doth it deliver heaven itself to us in this life? And then we hear the apostle say, *We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with honour and glory*[11]: there is half heaven got by death, glory. And then, *For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross*[12]; there is the other half, joy; all heaven purchased by death. And therefore, *If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed*, saith the apostle[13]; but *let him glorify God, in isto nomine*, as the Vulgate reads it; *in that behalf*, as we translate it. But, *In isto nomine*, saith St. Augustine: Let us glorify God, in that name; *non solum in nomine Christiani, sed Christiani patientis*, not only because he is a Christian in his baptism, but a Christian in a second baptism, a baptism of blood; not only as he hath received Christ, in accepting his institution, but because he hath conformed himself to Christ, in fulfilling his sufferings. And therefore, though we admit natural and human sorrow, in the calamities which overtake us, and surround us in this life: (for as all glasses will gather drops and tears from external causes, so this very glass which we look upon now, our Solomon in the text, our Saviour, had those sadnesses of heart toward his passion, and agonies in his passion) yet *Count it all joy when you fall into temptations*, saith the apostle[14]: all joy, that is, both the interest and the principal, hath the earnest and the bargain; for if you can conceive joy in your tribulations in this world, How shall that joy be multiplied unto you, when no tribulation shall be mingled with it? There is not a better evidence, nor a more binding earnest of everlasting joy in the next world, than to find joy of heart in the tribulations of this; fix thyself therefore upon this first glass, this Solomon, thy Saviour, *Behold King Solomon crowned*, &c., and by conforming thyself to his holy sadness, and humiliation, thou shalt also become like him, in his joy, and glory.

But then the hand of God hath not set up, but laid down another glass, wherein thou mayest see thyself; a glass that

[11] Heb. ii. 9.
[12] Heb. xii. 2.
[13] 1 Pet. iv. 16.
[14] James i. 2.

reflects thyself, and nothing but thyself. Christ, who was the other glass, is like thee in every thing, but not absolutely, for sin is excepted; but in this glass presented now (the body of our royal, but dead master and sovereign) we cannot, we do not except sin. Not only the greatest man is subject to natural infirmities, (Christ himself was so) but the holiest man is subject to original and actual sin, as thou art, and so a fit glass for thee, to see thyself in. Jet shows a man his face, as well as crystal; nay, a crystal glass will not show a man his face, except it be steeled, except it be darkened on the back side: Christ as he was a pure crystal glass, as he was God, had not been a glass for us, to have seen ourselves in, except he had been steeled, darkened with our human nature; neither was he ever so thoroughly darkened, as that he could present us wholly to ourselves, because he had no sin, without seeing of which we do not see ourselves. Those therefore that are like thee in all things, subject to human infirmities, subject to sins, and yet are translated, and translated by death, to everlasting joy, and glory, are nearest and clearest glasses for thee, to see thyself in; and such is this glass, which God hath proposed to thee, in this house. And therefore, change the word of the text, in a letter or two, from *egredimini*, to *ingredimini*; never go forth to see, but *Go in and see a Solomon crowned with his mother's crown*, &c. And when you shall find that hand that had signed to one of you a patent for title, to another for pension, to another for pardon, to another for dispensation, dead: that hand that settled possessions by his seal, in the keeper, and rectified honours by the sword, in his marshal, and distributed relief to the poor, in his almoner, and health to the diseased, by his immediate touch, dead: that hand that balanced his own three kingdoms so equally, as that none of them complained of one another, nor of him, and carried the keys of all the Christian world, and locked up, and let out armies in their due season, dead; how poor, how faint, how pale, how momentary, how transitory, how empty, how frivolous, how dead things, must you necessarily think titles, and possessions, and favours, and all, when you see that hand, which was the hand of destiny, of Christian destiny, of the Almighty God, lie dead! It was not so hard a hand when

we touched it last, nor so cold a hand when we kissed it last: that hand which was wont to wipe all tears from all our eyes, doth now but press and squeeze us as so many sponges, filled one with one, another with another cause of tears. Tears that can have no other bank to bound them, but the declared and manifested will of God: for, till our tears flow to that height, that they might be called a murmuring against the declared will of God, it is against our allegiance, it is disloyalty, to give our tears any stop, any termination, any measure. It was a great part of Anna's praise, *That she departed not from the temple, day nor night*[15]; visit God's temple often in the day, meet him in his own house, and depart not from his temples, (the dead bodies of his saints are his temples still) even at midnight; at midnight remember them, who resolve into dust, and make them thy glasses to see thyself in. Look now especially upon him whom God hath presented to thee now, and with as much cheerfulness as ever thou heardst him say, Remember my favours, or remember my commandments; hear him say now with the wise man, *Remember my judgment, for thine also shall be so; yesterday for me, and to-day for thee*[16]; he doth not say to-morrow, but to-day, for thee. Look upon him as a beam of that sun, as an abridgment of that Solomon in the text; for every Christian truly reconciled to God, and signed with his hand in the absolution, and sealed with his blood in the sacrament, (and this was his case) is a beam, and an abridgment of Christ himself. Behold him therefore, crowned with the crown that his mother gives him: his mother, the earth. In ancient times, when they used to reward soldiers with particular kinds of crowns, there was a great dignity *in corona graminea*, in a crown of grass: that denoted a conquest, or a defence of that land. He that hath but *coronam gramineam*, a turf of grass in a church-yard, hath a crown from his mother, and even in that burial taketh seisure of the resurrection, as by a turf of grass men give seisure of land. He is crowned in the day of his marriage; for though it be a day of divorce of us from him, and of divorce of his body from his soul, yet neither of these divorces break the marriage: his soul is

[15] Luke ii. 37. [16] Ecclus. xxxviii. 22.

married to him that made it, and his body and soul shall meet again, and all we, both then in that glory where we shall acknowledge, that there is no way to this marriage, but this divorce, nor to life, but by death. And lastly, he is crowned in the day of the gladness of his heart: he leaveth that heart, which was accustomed to the half joys of the earth, in the earth; and he hath enlarged his heart to a greater capacity of joy, and glory, and God hath filled it according to that new capacity. And therefore, to end all with the apostle's words, *I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them, which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, as others that have no hope; for if ye believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so, them also, which sleep in him, will God bring with him*[17]. But when you have performed this *ingredimini*, that you have gone in, and mourned upon him, and performed the *egredimini*, you have gone forth, and laid his sacred body, in consecrated dust, and come then to another *egredimini*, to a going forth in many several ways: some to the service of their new master, and some to the enjoying of their fortunes conferred by their old; some to the raising of new hopes, some to the burying of old, and all; some to new, and busy endeavours in court, some to contented retirings in the country; let none of us go so far from him, or from one another, in any of our ways, but that all we that have served him, may meet once a day, the first time we see the sun, in the ears of Almighty God, with humble and hearty prayer, that he will be pleased to hasten that day, in which it shall be an addition, even to the joy of that place, as perfect as it is, and as infinite as it is, to see that face again, and to see those eyes open there, which we have seen closed here. Amen.

[17] 1 Thess. iv. 13.

SERMON CXV.

Luke xxxiii. 24.

Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.

The Word of God is either the co-eternal and co-essential Son, our Saviour, which took flesh (*verbum caro factum est*) or it is the spirit of his mouth, by which we live, and not by bread only. And so, in a large acceptation, every truth is the word of God; for truth is uniform, and irrepugnant, and indivisible, as God. *Omne verum est omni vero consentiens.* More strictly the word of God, is that which God hath uttered, either in writing, as twice in the tables to Moses; or by ministry of angels, or prophets, in words; or by the unborn, in action, as in John Baptist's exultation within his mother; or by new-born, from the mouths of babes and sucklings; or by things unreasonable, as in Balaam's ass; or insensible, as in the whole book of such creatures, *The heavens declare the glory of God*, &c. But nothing is more properly the word of God to us, than that which God himself speaks in those organs and instruments, which himself hath assumed for his chiefest work, our redemption. For in creation God spoke, but in redemption he did; and more, he suffered. And of that kind are these words. God in his chosen manhood saith, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

These words shall be fitliest considered, like a goodly palace, if we rest a little, as in an outward court, upon consideration of prayer in general; and then draw near the view of the palace, in a second court, considering this special prayer in general, as the face of the whole palace. Thirdly, we will pass through the chiefest rooms of the palace itself; and then insist upon four steps: 1. Of whom he begs, (Father). 2. What he asks, (forgive them). 3. That he prays upon reason, (for). 4. What the reason is, (they know not). And lastly, as into the back side of all, we will cast the objections: as why only Luke remembers this prayer: and why this prayer, (as it seems by the punishment

continuing upon the Jews to this day) was not obtained at God's hands.

So therefore prayer is our first entry, for when it is said, *Ask and it shall be given*, it is also said, *Knock and it shall be opened*, showing that by prayer our entrance is. And not the entry only, but the whole house: *My house is the house of prayer*. Of all the conduits and conveyances of God's graces to us, none hath been so little subject to cavillations, as this of prayer. The sacraments have fallen into the hands of flatterers and robbers. Some have attributed too much to them, some detracted. Some have painted them, some have withdrawn their natural complexion. It hath been disputed, whether they be, how many they be, what they be, and what they do. The preaching of the word hath been made a servant of ambitions, and a shop of many men's new-fangled wares. Almost every means between God and man, suffers some adulteratings and disguises: but prayer least: and it hath most ways and addresses. It may be mental, for we may think prayers. It may be vocal, for we may speak prayers. It may be actual, for we do prayers. For deeds have voice; the vices of Sodom did cry, and the alms of Tobias. And if it were proper for St. John, in the first of the Revelation to turn back to see a voice, it is more likely God will look down, to hear a work. So then to do the office of your vocation sincerely, is to pray. How much the favourites of princes, and great personages labour, that they may be thought to have been in private conference with the prince. And though they be forced to wait upon his purposes, and talk of what he will, how fain they would be thought to have solicited their own, or their dependents' business. With the Prince of princes, this every man may do truly; and the sooner, the more beggar he is: for no man is heard here, but *in forma pauperis*.

Here we may talk long, welcomely, of our own affairs, and be sure to speed. You cannot whisper so low alone in your chamber, but he hears you, nor sing so loud in the congregation, but he distinguishes you. He grudges not to be chidden and disputed with, by Job. *The arrows of the Almighty are in me, and the venom thereof hath drunk up my spirit. Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh of brass*, &c. Not to be

directed and counselled by Jonas: who was angry and said; *Did not I say, when I was in my country, thou wouldest deal thus?* And when the Lord said, *Dost thou well to be angry?* He replied, *I do well to be angry to the death.* Nor almost to be threatened and neglected by Moses: *Do this, or blot my name out of thy book.* It is an honour to be able to say to servants, Do this: but to say to God, *Domine fac hoc*, and prevail, is more; and yet more easy. God is replenishingly everywhere: but most contractedly, and workingly in the temple. Since then every rectified man, is the temple of the Holy Ghost, when he prays; it is the Holy Ghost itself that prays; and what can be denied, where the asker gves? He plays with us, as children, shows us pleasing things, that we might cry for them, and have them. Before we call, he answers, and when we speak, he hears: so Isaiah LXV. 24. Physicians observe some symptoms so violent, that they must neglect the disease for a time, and labour to cure the accident; as burning fevers, in dysenteries. So in the sinful consumption of the soul, a stupidity and indisposition to prayer, must first be cured. For, *Ye lust, and have not, because ye ask not*, James iv. 2. The adulterous mother of the three great brothers, Gratian, Lombard, and Comestor[1], being warned by her confessor, to be sorry for her fact, said she could not, because her fault had so much profited the church. At least, said he, be sorry that thou canst not be sorry. So whosoever thou be, that canst not readily pray, at least pray, that thou mayest pray. For, as in bodily, so in spiritual diseases, it is a desperate state, to be speechless.

It were unmannerliness to hold you longer in the entry. One turn in the inner court, of this special prayer in general, and so enter the palace. This is not a prayer for his own ease, as that in his agony seems. It hath none of those infirmities, which curious schismatics find in that. No suspicion of ignorance, as there, (if it be possible). No tergiversation nor abandoning the noble work which he had begun, as there, (*Let this cup pass*). It is not an exemplar, or form, for us to imitate precisely, (otherwise

[1] Concerning these ecclesiastical writers, see Mosheim, vol. ii. pp. 256, 288; he, however, mentions nothing of their relationship: on the other hand, he says that Gratian was by birth a Tuscan, whereas Peter Lombard is said to have been born at Novara.—ED.

than in the doctrine) as that prayer, which we call the Lord's Prayer, not because he said it, for he could never say, *forgive us our trespasses*, but because he commanded us to say it. For though by Matthew, which saith, *After this manner pray*, we seem not bound to the words, yet Luke saith, *When you pray*, say, *Our Father which art*, &c. But this is a prayer of God, to God. Not as the Talmudist's Jews feign God to pray to himself, *Sit voluntas mea, ut misericordia mea superet iram meam;* but as when foreign merchandise is misported, the prince may permit, or inhibit his subjects to buy it, or not to buy it. Our blessed Saviour arriving in this world freighted with salvation, a thing which this world never had power to have without him, except in that short time, between man's creation and fall, he by this prayer begs, that even to these despisers of it, it may be communicable, and that their ignorance of the value of it, may not deprive them of it. Teaching that by example here, which he gave in precept before, *Pray for them which persecute you*[s], that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore, doing so now, he might well say, *Father, forgive them*, which is the first room in this glorious palace. And in this contemplation, my unworthy soul, thou art presently in the presence. No passing of guards, nor ushers. No examination of thy degree or habit. The prince is not asleep, nor private, nor weary of giving, nor refers to others. He puts thee not to prevail by angels nor archangels. But lest anything might hinder thee, from coming into his presence, his presence comes into thee. And lest majesty should dazzle thee, thou art to speak but to thy Father. Of which word, *Abba*, the root is, to will; from which root, the fruit also must be willingness, and propenseness to grant. God is the Father of Christ, by that mystical and eternal inexpressible generation, which never began nor ended. Of which incomprehensible mystery, Moses and the ancient prophets spake so little, and so indirectly, that till the dawning of the day of Christ, after Esdras' time, those places seem not to be intended of the Trinity. Nay, a good while after Christ, they were but tenderly applied to that sense. And at this day, the most of the writers in the reformed churches, considering that we need not such far fetched, and such

[s] Matt. v. 44.

forced helps, and withal, weighing how well the Jews of these times are provided with other expositions of those places, are very sparing in using them, but content themselves modestly herein, with the testimonies of the New Testament. Truly, this mystery is rather the object of faith than reason; and it is enough that we believe Christ to have even been the Son of God, by such generation, and ourselves his sons by adoption. So that God is Father to all; but yet so, that though Christ say[3], *My Father is greater than all*, he adds, *I and my Father are all one*, to show his eternal interest. He seems to put a difference, *I go to my Father*[4], and your Father, my God, and your God. The Roman stories have, that when Claudius saw it conduce to his ends, to get the tribuneship, of which he was incapable, because a patrician, he suffered himself to be adopted. But against this adoption, two exceptions were found; one, that he was adopted by a man of lower rank, a plebeian; which was unnatural; and by a younger man than himself, which took away the presentation of a father. But our adoption is regular. For first, we are made the sons of the Most High, and of the Ancient of Days, there was no one word, by which he could so nobly have maintained his dignity, kept his station, justified his cause, and withal expressed his humility and charity, as this, Father. They crucified him, for saying himself to be the Son of God. And in the midst of torment, he both professes the same still, and lets them see, that they have no other way of forgiveness, but that he is the Son of that Father. For no man cometh to the Father but by the Son.

And at this voice (Father) O most blessed Saviour, thy Father, which is so fully thine, that for thy sake, he is ours too, which is so wholly thine, that he is thyself, which is all mercy, yet will not spare thee, all justice, yet will not destroy us. And that glorious army of angels, which hitherto by their own integrity maintained their first and pure condition, and by this work of thine, now near the *consummatum est*, attend a confirmation, and infallibility of ever remaining so; and that faithful company of departed saints, to whom thy merit must open a more inward and familiar room in thy Father's kingdom, stand all attentive, to hear

[3] John x. 29, 30. [4] John xx. 17.

what thou wilt ask of this Father. And what shall they hear? What dost thou ask? Forgive them, forgive them? Must murderers be forgiven? Must the offended ask it? And must a Father grant it? And must he be solicited, and remembered by the name of Father to do it? Was not thy passion enough, but thou must have compassion? And is thy mercy so violent, that thou wilt have a fellow-feeling of their imminent afflictions, before they have any feeling? The angels might expect a present employment for their destruction: the saints might be out of fear, that they should be assumed or mingled in their fellowship. But thou wilt have them pardoned. And yet dost not out of thine own fulness pardon them, as thou didst the thief upon the cross, because he did already confess thee; but thou tellest them, that they may be forgiven, but at thy request, and if they acknowledge their advocate to be the Son of God. Father, forgive them. I that cannot revenge thy quarrel, cannot forgive them. I that could not be saved, but by their offence, cannot forgive them. And must a Father, Almighty, and well pleased in thee, forgive them? Thou art more charitable towards them, than by thy direction we may be to ourselves. We must pray for ourselves limitedly, forgive us, as we forgive. But thou wilt have their forgiveness illimited and unconditioned. Thou seemest not so much as to presume a repentance; which is so essential, and necessary in all transgressions, as where by man's fault the actions of God are diverted from his appointed ends, God himself is content to repent the doing of them. As he repented first the making of man, and then the making of a king. But God will have them within the arms of his general pardon. And we are all delivered from our debts; for God hath given his word, his co-essential word, for us all. And though, (as in other prodigal debts, the interest exceed the principal) our actual sins exceed original, yet God by giving his word for us, hath acquitted all.

But the affections of our Saviour are not inordinate, nor irregular. He hath a *for*, for his prayer: *Forgive them, for*, &c. And where he hath not this *for*, as in his prayer in his agony, he quickly interrupts the violence of his request, with a *but*, *Father, let this cup pass;* but *not my will:* in that form of prayer which

himself taught us, he hath appointed a *for*, on God's part, which is ever the same unchangeable; *For thine is the kingdom;* therefore supplications belong to thee: *the power*, thou openest thy hand and fillest every living thing: *the glory*, for thy name is glorified in thy grants. But because on our part, the occasions are variable, he hath left our *for*, to our religious discretion. For when it is said, *You lust and have not, because you ask not*[5]; it followeth presently, *you ask and miss, because you ask amiss.* It is not a fit *for*, for every private man, to ask much means, for he would do much good. I must not pray, Lord put into my hands the strength of Christian kings, for out of my zeal, I will employ thy benefits to thine advantage, thy soldiers against thine enemies, and be a bank against that deluge, wherewith thine enemy the Turk threatens to overflow thy people. I must not pray, Lord, fill my heart with knowledge and understanding, for I would compose the schisms in thy church, and reduce thy garment to the first continual and seemless integrity; and redress the deafnesses and oppressions of judges, and officers. But he gave us a convenient scantling for our *fors*, who prayed, Give me enough, for I may else despair, give me not too much, for so I may presume. Of schoolmen, some affirm prayer to be an act of our will; for we would have that which we ask. Others, of our understanding; for by it we ascend to God, and better our knowledge, which is the proper ailment and food of our understanding; so, that is a perplexed case. But all agree, that it is an act of our reason, and therefore must be reasonable. For only reasonable things can pray; for the beasts and ravens, (Psalm cxlvii. 9.) are not said to pray for food, but to cry. Two things are required to make a prayer. 1. *Pius affectus*, which was not in the devils' request, *Let us go into the swine*[6], nor *Stretch out thine hand, and touch all he hath*[7]; and, *stretch out thine hand, and touch his bones*, and therefore these were not prayers. And it must be *rerum decentium:* for our government in that point, this may inform us. Things absolutely good, as remission of sins, we may absolutely beg: and to escape things absolutely ill, as sin. But mean and indifferent things, qualified by the circumstances, we must ask

[5] James iv. 1. [6] Matt. viii. 31. [7] Job i. 11.

conditionally and referringly to the Giver's will. For when Paul begged *stimulum carnis* to be taken from him, it was not granted, but he had this answer, *My grace is sufficient for thee*[8].

Let us now (not in curiosity, but for instruction) consider the reason: *They know not what they do.* First, if ignorance excuse: and then, if they were ignorant.

Hast thou, O God, filled all thy Scriptures, both of thy recorders and notaries, which have penned the history of thy love, to thy people; and of thy secretaries the prophets, admitted to the foreknowledge of thy purposes, and instructed in thy cabinet; hast thou filled these with praises and persuasions of wisdom and knowledge, and must these persecutors be pardoned for their ignorance? Hast thou bid Esay to say, *It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them, shall not have compassion of them*[9]. And *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*[10]; and now dost thou say, Forgive them because they know not? Shall ignorance, which is often the cause of sin, often a sin itself, often the punishment of sin, and ever an infirmity and disease contracted by the first great sin, advantage them? Who can understand his faults, saith the man according to thy heart; *Lord cleanse me from my secret faults*[11]: he durst not make his ignorance the reason of his prayer, but prayed against ignorance. But thy mercy is as the sea: both before it was the sea, for it overspreads the whole world; and since it was called into limits: for it is not the less infinite for that. And as by the sea, the most remote and distant nations enjoy one another, by traffic and commerce, East and West becoming neighbours: so by mercy, the most different things are united and reconciled; sinners have heaven; traitors are in the princes' bosom; and ignorant persons are in the spring of wisdom, being forgiven, not only though they be ignorant, but because they are ignorant. But all ignorance is not excusable; nor any less excusable, than not to know, what ignorance is not to be excused. Therefore, there is an ignorance which they call *nescientiam*, a not knowing of things not appertaining to us. This we had had, though Adam had stood; and the angels have it, for they know not the latter day, and therefore

[8] 2 Cor. viii.
[9] Isaiah xxvii. 11.
[10] Hosea iv. 6.
[11] Psalm xix. 12.

for this, we are not chargeable. They call the other privation, which if it proceed merely from our own sluggishness, in not searching the means made for our instruction, is ever inexcusable. If from God, who for his own just ends hath cast clouds over those lights which should guide us, it is often excusable. For Paul saith, *I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and an oppressor, but I was received to mercy, for I did it ignorantly, through unbelief*[12]. So, though we are all bound to believe, and therefore faults done by unbelief cannot escape the name and nature of sin, yet since belief is the immediate gift of God, faults done by unbelief, without malicious concurrences and circumstances, obtain mercy and pardon from that abundant fountain of grace, Christ Jesus. And therefore it was a just reason, *Forgive them, for they know not.* If they knew not, which is evident, both by this speech from truth itself, and by 2 Cor. ii. 8., *Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;* and Acts iii. 17., *I know that through ignorance ye did it.* And though after so many powerful miracles, this ignorance were vincible, God having revealed enough to convert them, yet there seems to be enough on their parts, to make it a perplexed case, and to excuse, though not a malicious persecuting, yet a not consenting to his doctrine. For they had a law, *Whosoever shall make himself the son of God, let him die.* And they spoke out of their laws, when they said, *We have no other king but Cæsar.* There were therefore some among them reasonably, and zealously ignorant. And for those, the Son ever welcome, and well heard, begged of his Father, ever accessible, and exorable, a pardon ever ready and natural.

We have now passed through all those rooms which we unlocked and opened at first. And now may that point, why this prayer is remembered only by one evangelist, and why by Luke, be modestly inquired: for we are all admitted and welcomed into the acquaintance of the Scriptures, upon such conditions as travellers are into other countries: if we come as praisers and admirers of their commodities and government, not as spies into the mysteries of their state, nor searchers, nor calumniators of their weaknesses. For though the Scriptures, like a strong recti-

[12] 1 Tim. i. 13.

fied state, be not endangered by such a curious malice of any, yet he which brings that, deserves no admittance. When those great commissioners which are called the Septuagint, sent from Jerusalem, to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, had perfected their work, it was, and is an argument of Divine assistance, that writing severally, they differed not. The same may prove even to weak and faithless men, that the Holy Ghost superintended the four evangelists, because they differ not; as they which have written their harmonies, make it evident: but to us, faith teacheth the other way. And we conclude not, because they agree, the Holy Ghost directed; for heathen writers and malefactors in examinations do so; but because the Holy Ghost directed, we know they agree, and differ not. For as an honest man, ever of the same thoughts, differs not from himself, though he do not ever say the same things, if he say not contraries; so the four evangelists observe the uniformity and sameness of their guide, though all did not say all the same things, since none contradicts any. And as, when my soul, which enables all my limbs to their functions, disposes my legs to go, my whole body is truly said to go, because none stays behind; so when the Holy Spirit, which had made himself as a common soul to their four souls, directed one of them to say anything, all are well understood to have said it. And therefore when to that place[18], where that evangelist cites the prophet Jeremy, for words spoken by Zachary, many medicines are applied by the fathers; as, that many copies have no name, that Jeremy might be binominous, and have both names, a thing frequent in the Bible, that it might be the error of a transcriber, that there was extant an Apocryphal Book of Jeremy, in which these words were, and sometimes things of such books were vouched, as Jannes and Jambres by Paul; St. Augustine insists upon, and teaches rather this, that it is more wonderful, that all the prophets spake by one Spirit, and so agreed, than if any one of them had spoken all those things; and therefore he adds, *Singula sunt omnium, et omnia sunt singulorum*, All say what any of them say; and in this sense most congruously is that of St. Hierome appliable, that

[18] Matt. xxvii. 9.

the four evangelists are *quadriga Divina*, that as the four chariot wheels, though they look to the four corners of the world, yet they move to one end and one way, so the evangelists have both one scope, and one way.

Yet not so precisely, but that they differ in words: for as their general intention, common to them all begat that consent, so a private reason peculiar to each of them, for the writing of their histories at that time, made those diversities which seem to be for Matthew, after he had preached to the Jews, and was to be transplanted into another vineyard, the Gentiles, left them written in their own tongue, for permanency, which he had preached transitorily by word. Mark, when the Gospel fructified in the West, and the church enlarged herself, and grew a great body, and therefore required more food, out of Peter's dictates, and by his approbation published his Evangile. Not an epitome of Matthew's, as St. Jerome (I know why) imagines, but a just and entire history of our blessed Saviour. And as Matthew's reason was to supply a want in the Eastern church, Mark's in the Western; so on the other side Luke's was to cut off an excess and superfluity: for then many had undertaken this story, and dangerously inserted and mingled uncertainties and obnoxious improbabilities: and he was more curious and more particular than the rest, both because he was more learned, and because he was so individual a companion of the most learned St. Paul, and did so much write Paul's words, that Eusebius thereupon mistaketh the words, *Christ is raised according to my Gospel*[14], to prove that Paul was author of this Gospel attributed to Luke. John the minion of Christ upon earth, and survivor of the apostles, (whose books rather seem fallen from heaven, and writ with the hand which engraved the stone tables, than a man's work) because the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus were rooted, who upon this true ground, then evident and fresh, that Christ hath spoken many things which none of the other three evangelists had recorded, uttered many things as his, which he never spoke: John I say, more diligently than the rest handleth his divinity, and his sermons, things specially brought into question by them. So therefore all

[14] 2 Tim. ii. 8.

writ one thing, yet all have some things particular. And Luke most, for he writ last of three, and largeliest for himself, saith[15], *I have made the former treatise of all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day that he was taken up;* which speech, lest the words in the last of John, *If all were written which Jesus did, the world could not contain the books*, should condemn, Ambrose and Chrysostom interpret well out of the words themselves, *Scripsit de omnibus, non omnia*, He writ of all, but not all: for it must have the same limitation, which Paul giveth his words, who saith, Acts xx., in one verse, *I have kept nothing back, but have showed you all the counsel of God;* and in another, *I kept back nothing that was profitable.* It is another peculiar singularity of Luke's, that he addresseth his history to one man, Theophilus. For it is but weakly surmised, that he chose that name, for all lovers of God, because the interpretation of the word suffereth it, since he addeth most noble Theophilus. But the work doth not the less belong to the whole church, for that, no more than his master's epistles do though they be directed to particulars.

It is also a singularity in him to write upon that reason, because divers have written. In human knowledge, to abridge or suck, and then suppress other authors, is not ever honest nor profitable: we see after that vast enterprise of Justinian, who distilled all the law into one vessel, and made one book of two thousand, suppressing all the rest, Alciate wisheth he had let them alone, and thinketh the doctors of our times would better have drawn useful things from those volumes, than his Trebonian and Dorothee did[16]. And Aristotle after, by the immense liberality of Alexander, he had engrossed all authors, is said to have defaced all, that he might be instead of all: and therefore, since they cannot rise against him, he imputes to them errors which they held not: vouches only such objections from them, as he is able to answer; and propounds all good things in his own name, which he ought to them. But in this history of Luke's, it is otherwise: he had no authority to suppress them, nor doth he

[15] Acts i. 1.

[16] Tribonian, Theophilus, and Dorotheus were the persons selected by Justinian to compile the Institutes.—See Gibbon, chap. xliv.—Ed.

reprehend or calumniate them, but writes the truth simply, and leaves it to outwear falsehood: and so it hath: Moses's rod hath devoured the conjuror's rod, and Luke's story still retains the majesty of the maker, and theirs are not.

Other singularities in Luke, of form or matter, I omit, and end with one like this in our text. As in the apprehending of our blessed Saviour, all the evangelists record, that Peter cut off Malchus's ear, but only Luke remembers the healing of it again: (I think) because that act of curing, was most present and obvious to his consideration, who was a physician: so he was therefore most apt, to remember this prayer of Christ, which is the physic and balsamum of our soul, and must be applied to us all, (for we do all crucify him, and we know not what we do) and therefore St. Hierome gave a right character of him, in his epistle to Paulinus, *Fuit medicus, et pariter omnia verba illius, Animæ languentis sunt medicinæ*, As he was a physician, so all his words are physic for a languishing soul.

Now let us despatch the last consideration, of the effect of this prayer. Did Christ intend the forgiveness of the Jews, whose utter ruin God (that is, himself) had fore-decreed? And which he foresaw, and bewailed even then hanging upon the cross? For those divines which reverently forbear to interpret the words, *Lord, Lord, why hast thou forsaken me?* of a suffering hell in his soul, or of a departing of the Father from him; (for John xvi., it is, *I am not alone, for the Father is with me*) offer no exposition of those words more convenient, than that the foresight of the Jews' imminent calamities, expressed and drew those words from him: *In their afflictions, were all kinds, and all degrees of misery.* So that as one writer of the Roman story saith elegantly, *He that considereth the acts of Rome, considereth not the acts of one people, but of mankind:* I may truly of the Jews' afflictions, he that knoweth them, is ignorant of nothing that this world can threaten. For to that which the present authority of the Romans inflicted upon them, our Schools have added upon their posterities; that they are slaves to Christians, and their goods subject to spoil, if the laws of the princes where they live, did not out of indulgency defend them. Did he then ask, and was not heard?

God forbid. A man is heard, when that is given which his will desired; and our will is ever understood to be a will rectified, and concurrent with God. This is *voluntas*, a discoursed and examined will. That which is upon the first sight of the object, is *velleitas*, a willingness, which we resist not, only because we thought not of it. And such a willingness had Christ, when suddenly he wished that the cup might pass: but quickly conformed his will to his Father's. But in this prayer his will was present, therefore fulfilled. Briefly then, in this prayer he commended not all the Jews, for he knew the chief to sin knowingly, and so out of the reach of his reason, (*for they know not*). Nor any, except they repented after: for it is not ignorance, but repentance, which deriveth to us the benefit of God's pardon. For he that sins of ignorance, may be pardoned if he repent; but he that sins against his conscience, and is thereby impenitable, cannot be pardoned. And this is all, which I will say of these words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

O Eternal God, look down from thy throne to thy foot-stool: from thy blessed company of angels and saints, to us, by our own faults made more wretched and contemptible, than the worms which shall eat us, or the dust which we were, and shall be. O Lord, under the weight of thy justice we cannot stand. Nor had any other title to thy mercy, but the name of Father, and that we have forfeited. That name of sons of God, thou gavest to us, all at once in Adam; and he gave it away from us all by his sin. And thou hast given it again to every one of us, in our regeneration by baptism, and we have lost it again by our transgressions. And yet thou wast not weary of being merciful, but didst choose one of us, to be a fit and worthy ransom for us all; and by the death of thy Christ, our Jesus, gavest us again the title and privilege of thy sons; but with conditions, which though easy, we have broke, and with a yoke, which though light and sweet, we have cast off. How shall we then dare to call thee Father? Or to beg that thou wilt make one trial more of us? These hearts are accustomed to rebellions, and hopeless. But, O God, create in us new hearts, hearts capable of the love and fear, due to a

Father. And then we shall dare to say, *Father*, and to say, *Father, forgive us.* Forgive us O Father, and all which are engaged, and accountable to thee for us; forgive our parents, and those which undertook for us in baptism. Forgive the civil magistrate, and the minister. Forgive them their negligences, and us our stubbornnesses. And give us the grace that we may ever sincerely say, both this prayer of example and counsel, *Forgive our enemies*, and that other of precept, *Our Father which art in heaven*, &c.

SERMON CXVI.

PREACHED FEBRUARY 21, 1611.

MATTHEW xxi. 44.

Whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

ALMIGHTY GOD made us for his glory, and his glory is not the glory of a tyrant, to destroy us, but his glory is in our happiness. He put us in a fair way towards that happiness in nature, in our creation, that way would have brought us to heaven, but then we fell, and (if we consider ourselves only) irrecoverably. He put us after into another way, over thorny hedges and ploughed lands, through the difficulties and encumbrances of all the ceremonial law; there was no way to heaven then, but that; after that, he brought us a cross way, by the cross of Jesus Christ, and the application of his Gospel, and that is our way now. If we compare the way of nature, and our way, we went out of the way at the town's end, as soon as we were in it, we were out of it. Adam died as soon as he lived, and fell as soon as he was set on foot; if we compare the way of the law, and ours, the Jews and the Christians, their synagogue was but as God's farm, our church is as his dwelling-house; to them *locavit vineam*, he let out his vine to husbandmen, and then *peregre profectus*, he went into a

far country, he promised a Messias, but deferred his coming a long time: but to us *dabitur regnum*, a kingdom is given; the vineyard is changed into a kingdom, here is a good improvement, and the lease into an absolute deed of gift, here is a good enlargement of the term. He gives, therefore he will not take away again. He gives a kingdom, therefore there is a fulness and all-sufficiency in the gift; and he does not go into any far country, but stays with us, to govern us, *usque ad consummationem*, till the end of the world; here therefore God takes all into his own hands, and he comes to dwell upon us himself, to which purpose he ploughs up our hearts, and he builds upon us; *Vos Dei agricultura, et Dei ædificium, Ye are God's husbandry, and God's building*[1]: now of this, this husbandry God speaks familiarly and parabolically many times in Scriptures: of this building particucularly and principally in this place, where having intimated unto us the several benefits we have received from Christ Jesus in that appellation, as he is a stone; he tells us also our dangers in mis-behaving ourselves towards it, *Whosoever shall fall on this*, &c.

Christ then is a stone, and we may run into two dangers: first, we may fall upon this stone, and then this stone may fall upon us; but yet we have a great deal of comfort presented to us, in that Christ is presented to us as a stone, for there we shall find him, first, to be the foundation-stone, nothing can stand which is not built upon Christ; secondly, to be *lapis angularis*, a corner stone, that unites things most disunited; and then to be *lapis Jacob*, the stone that Jacob slept upon; fourthly, to be *lapis Davidis*, the stone that David slew Goliah withal; and lastly to be *lapis Petra*, such a stone as is a rock, and such a rock as no waters nor storms can remove or shake, these are benefits: Christ Jesus is a stone, no firmness but in him; a fundamental stone, no building but on him; a corner stone, no piecing nor reconciliation, but in him; and Jacob's stone, no rest, no tranquillity, but in him; and David's stone, no anger, no revenge, but in him; and a rocky stone, no defence against troubles and tribulations, but in him; and upon this stone we fall and are broken, and this stone may fall on us, and *grind us to powder*.

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 9.

First in the metaphor, that Christ is called a stone, the firmness is expressed: forasmuch as he loved his own that were in the world, *In finem dilexit eos*, says St. John, *He loved them to the end*[a]; and not to any particular end, for any use of his own, but to their end; *Qui erant in mundo*, says Cyril, *ad distinctionem angelorum*, He loved them in the world, and not angels; he loved not only them who were in a confirmed estate of mutual loving him too, but even them who were themselves conceived in sin, and then conceived all their purposes in sin too, them who could have no cleansing but in his blood, and when they were cleansed in his blood, their own clothes would defile them again, them who by nature are not able to love him at all, and when by grace they are brought to love him, can express their love no other way, but to be glad that he was betrayed, and scourged, and scorned, and nailed, and crucified; and to be glad, that if all this were not already done, it might be done yet, to long, and wish, that if Christ were not crucified, he might be crucified now, (which is a strange manner of expressing love) those men he loved, and loved unto the end; men and not angels; and then men, *Ad distinctionem mortuorum*, says Chrysostom, Not only the patriarchs, who were departed out of the world, who had loved him so well, as to take his word for their salvation, and had lived and died in the faithful contemplation of a future promise, which they never saw performed; but those who were partakers of the performance of all those promises, those into the midst of whom he came in person, those upon he wrought with his piercing doctrine, and his powerful miracles, those who for all this loved not him, he loved; *et in finem*, he loved them to the end: it is much that he should love them *in fine*, at their end, that he should look graciously on them at last, that when their sun sets, their eyes faint, his sun of grace should arise, and his East be brought to their West, that then in the shadow of death, the Lord of life should quicken and inanimate their hearts: that when their last bell tolls, and calls them to their first judgment, (and first and last judgment to this purpose is all one) the passing bell, and angel's trump sound all but one note, *Surgite qui dormitis in pulvere*, Arise ye that sleep in the dust, which is the voice of the

[a] John xiii. 1.

angels, and *Surgite qui vigilatis in plumis*, Arise ye that cannot sleep in feathers, for the pangs of death, which is the voice of the bell, is but one voice; for God at the general judgment, shall never reverse any particular judgment, formerly given; that God should then come to the bed's side, *Ad sibilandum populum suum*, as the prophet Ezekiel speaks, to hiss softly for his child, to speak comfortably in his ear, to whisper gently to his departing soul, and to drown and overcome with this soft music of his, all the danger of the angels' trumpets, all the horror of the ringing bell, all the cries, and vociferations of a distressed, and distracted, and scattering family, yea all the accusations of his own conscience, and all the triumphant acclamations of the devil himself; that God should love a man thus *in fine*, at his end, and return to him then, though he had suffered him to go astray from him before, it is a great testimony of an unspeakable love: but his love is not only *in fine*, at the end, but *in finem*, to the end, all the way to the end. He leaves them not uncalled at first, he leaves them not unaccompanied in the way, he leaves them not unrecompensed at the last, that God who is Almighty, *Alpha* and *Omega*, first and last, that God is also love itself, and therefore this love is *Alpha* and *Omega*, first and last too; consider Christ's proceeding with Peter in the ship, in the storm; first he suffered him to be in some danger, but then he visits him with that strong assurance, *Noli timere*, *Be not afraid, it is I*[3], any testimony of his presence rectifies all. This puts Peter into that spiritual knowledge and confidence, *Jube me venire*, *Lord bid me come to thee;* he hath a desire to be with Christ, but yet stays his bidding; he puts not himself into an unnecessary danger, without a commandment; Christ bids him, and Peter comes, but yet, though Christ were in his sight, and even in the actual exercise of his love to him, yet as soon as he saw a gust, a storm, *timuit*, he was afraid, and Christ letteth him fear, and letteth him sink, and letteth him cry; but he directed his fear, and his cry to the right end, *Domine salvum me fac*, Lord save me, and thereupon he stretcheth out his hand and saved him: God doth not raise his children to honour, and great estates, and then leave them, and expose them to be subjects, and exercises of the malice

[3] Matt. xiv. 27.

of others, nor he doth not make them mighty, and then leave them, *ut glorietur in malo qui potens est*, that he should think it a glory to be able to do harm. He doth not impoverish and dishonour his children, and then leave them; leave them insensible of that doctrine, that patience is as great a blessing as abundance; God giveth not his children health, and then leaveth them to a boldness in surfeiting; nor beauty, and leave them to a confidence of opening themselves to all solicitations; nor valour, and then leaveth them to a spirit of quarrelsomeness; God maketh no patterns of his works, no models of his houses, he maketh whole pieces, he maketh perfect houses, he putteth his children into good ways, and he directeth and protecteth them in those ways: for this is the constancy and the perseverance of the love of Christ Jesus, as he is called in this text a stone. To come to the particular benefits; the first is that he is *lapis fundamentalis*, a foundation-stone; for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now where St. Augustine saith, (as he doth in two or three places) that this place of St. Paul's to the Corinthians[4], is one of these places of which St. Peter saith, *Quædam difficilia*, There are some things in St. Paul hard to be understood: St. Augustine's meaning is, that the difficulty is in the next words, How any man should build hay or stubble upon so good a foundation as Christ, how any man that pretendeth to live in Christ, should live ill, for in the other there can be no difficulty, How Christ Jesus to a Christian, should be the only foundation: and therefore to place salvation or damnation in such an absolute decree of God, as should have no relation to the fall of man, or reparation in a Redeemer; this is to remove this stone out of the foundation, for a Christian may be well content to begin at Christ: if any man therefore have laid any other foundation to his faith, or any other foundation to his actions, possession of great places, alliance in great families, strong parties in courts, obligation upon dependants, acclamations of people; if he have laid any other foundations for pleasure, and contentment, care of health, and complexion, appliableness in conversation, delightfulness in discourses, cheerfulness in disportings, interchanging of secrets, and such other small wares of

[4] 1 Cor. iii.

courts and cities as these are: whosoever hath laid such foundations as these, must proceed as that general did, who when he received a besieged town to mercy, upon condition that in sign of subjection they should suffer him to take off one row of stones from their walls, he took away the lowest row, the foundation, and so ruined and demolished the whole walls of the city; so must he that hath these false foundations (that is, these habits) divest the habit, root out the lowest stone, that is, the general, and radical inclination to these disorders: for he shall never be able to watch and resist every particular temptation, if he trust only to his moral constancy; no, nor if he place Christ for the roof to cover all his sins, when he hath done them; his mercy worketh by way of pardon after, not by way of *non obstante*, and privilege to do a sin beforehand; but beforehand we must have the foundation in our eye; when we undertake any particular action, in the beginning, we must look how that will suit with the foundation, with Christ; for there is his first place, to be *lapis fundamentalis.*

And then, after we have considered him, first, in the foundation (as we are all Christians) he grows to be *lapis angularis*, the corner-stone, to unite those Christians, which seem to be of divers ways, divers aspects, divers professions together; as we consider him in the foundation, there he is the root of faith, as we consider him in the corner, there he is the root of charity, in Esay he is both together, *a sure foundation* and a *corner-stone*[5], as he was in the place of Esay, *lapis probatus*, I will lay in Sion a tried stone, and in the Psalm[6], *lapis reprobatus*, a stone that the builders refused, in this consideration, he is *lapis approbatus*, a stone approved by all sides, that unites all things together: consider first, what divers things he unites in his own person; that he should be the son of a woman, and yet no son of man, that the son of a woman should be the son of God, that man's sinful nature, and innocency should meet together, a man that should not sin, that God's nature and mortality should meet together, a God that must die; briefly, that he should do and suffer so many things impossible as man, impossible as God. Thus he was a corner-stone, that brought together natures,

[5] Isaiah xxviii. 16. [6] Psalm cxviii. 22.

naturally incompatible. Thus he was *lapis angularis*, a corner-stone in his person, consider him in his offices, as a Redeemer, as a Mediator, and so he hath united God to man; yea, rebellious man to jealous God: he is such a corner stone has hath united heaven and earth, Jerusalem and Babylon together.

Thus in his person, and thus in his offices, consider him in his power, and he is such a corner-stone, as that he is the God of peace, and love, and union, and concord. Such a corner-stone as is able to unite, and reconcile (as it did in Abraham's house) a wife and a concubine in one bed, a covetous father and a wasteful son in one family, a severe magistrate and a licentious people in one city, an absolute prince and a jealous people in one kingdom, law and conscience in one government, Scripture and tradition in one church. If we would but make Christ Jesus and his peace, the life and soul of all our actions, and all our purposes; if we would mingle that sweetness and suppleness which he loves, and which he is, in all our undertakings; if in all controversies, book controversies, and sword controversies, we would fit them to him, and see how near they would meet in him, that is, how near we might come to be friends, and yet both sides be good Christians; then we placed this stone in his second right place, who as he is a corner-stone reconciling God and man in his own person, and a corner-stone in reconciling God and mankind in his office, so he desires to be a corner-stone in reconciling man and man, and settling peace among ourselves, not for worldly ends, but for this respect, that we might all meet in him to love one another, not because we made a stronger party by that love, not because we made a sweeter conversation by that love, but because we met closer in the bosom of Christ Jesus; where we must at last either rest altogether eternally, or be altogether eternally thrown out, or be eternally separated and divorced from one another.

Having then received Christ for the foundation-stone, (we believe aright) and for the corner-stone (we interpret charitably the opinions and actions of other men) the next is, that he be *lapis Jacob*, a stone of rest and security to ourselves. When Jacob was in his journey he took a stone, and that stone was his pillow, upon that he slept all night, &c., resting upon that stone,

he saw the ladder that reached from heaven to earth; it is much to have this egress and regress to God, to have a sense of being gone from him, and a desire and means of returning to him; when we do fall into particular sins, it is well if we can take hold of the first step of this ladder, with that hand of David, *Domine respice in testamentum, O Lord, consider thy covenant*[7], if we can remember God of his covenant, to his people, and to their seed, it is well; it is more, if we can clamber a step higher on this ladder to a *Domine labia mea aperies*, if we come to open our lips in a true confession of our wretched condition and of those sins by which we have forfeited our interest in that covenant, it is more; and more than that too, if we come to that *inebriabo me lacrymis*[8], if we overflow and make ourselves drunk with tears, in a true sense, and sorrow for those sins, still it is more; and more than all this, if we can expostulate with God in an *Usque quo Domine, How long, O Lord, shall I take counsel in myself, having weariness in my heart*[9]? These steps, these gradations towards God, do well; war is a degree of peace, as it is the way of peace; and these colluctations and wrestlings with God, bring a man to peace with him; but then is a man upon this stone of Jacob, when in a fair, and even, and constant religious course of life, he enters into his sheets every night, as though his neighbours next day were to shroud and wind him in those sheets; he shuts up his eyes every night, as though his executors had closed them; and lies down every night, not as though his man were to call him up next morning, or to the next day's sport, or business, but as though the angels were to call him to the resurrection; and this is our third benefit, as Christ is a stone, we have security and peace of conscience in him.

The next is, that he is *lapis David*, the stone with which David slew Goliah, and with which we may overcome all our enemies; *Sicut baculus crucis, ita lapis Christi habuit typum*[10]; David's sling was a type of the cross, and the stone was a type of Christ, we will choose to insist upon spiritual enemies, sins; and this is that stone that enables the weakest man to overthrow the strongest sin, if he proceed as David did: David says to Goliah,

[7] Psalm LXXIV. 20.
[8] Isaiah xvi. 9.
[9] Psalm xiii. 2.
[10] Augustine.

Thou comest to me with a spear and a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the God of the hosts of Israel, whom thou hast railed upon[11], if thou watch the approach of any sin, any giant sin that transports thee most; if thou apprehend it to rail against the Lord of hosts, (that is, that there is a loud and active blasphemy against God in every sin) if thou discern it to come with a sword, or a spear, (that is, persuasions of advancement if thou do it, or threatenings of dishonour, if thou do it not,) if it come with a shield, (that is, with promises to cover and palliate it, though thou do it,) if then this David, (thy attempted soul) can put his hand into his bag (as David did) (for *Quid cor hominis nisi sacculus Dei*[12]? A man's heart is that bag in which God lays up all good directions) if he can but take into his consideration his Jesus, his Christ, and sling one of his works, his words, his commandments, his merits, this Goliah, this giant sin, will fall to the ground; and then, as it is said of David, that he slew him when he had no sword in his hand, and yet in the next verse, that he took his sword and slew him with that: so even by the consideration of what my Lord hath done for me, I shall give that sin the first death's wound, and then I shall kill him with his own sword, that is, his own abomination, his own foulness shall make me detest him. If I dare but look my sin in the face, if I dare tell him, I come in the name of the Lord, if I consider my sin, I shall triumph over it, *Et dabit certanti victoriam qui dedit certandi audaciam*[13], That God that gave me courage to fight, will give me strength to overcome.

The last benefit which we consider in Christ, as he is a stone, is, that he is *petra*, a rock; the rock gave water to the Israelites in the wilderness[14]; and he gave them honey out of the stone, and oil out of the hard rock[15]: now when St. Paul says, That our fathers drank of the same Rock as we, he adds that the same Rock was Christ[16]; so that all temporal, and all spiritual blessings to us, and to the fathers, were all conferred upon us in Christ; but we consider not now any miraculous production from the rock, but that which is natural to the rock; that it is a firm defence to us in all tempests, in all afflictions, in all tribulations;

[11] 1 Sam. xvii. 45. [12] Gregory. [13] Augustine.
[14] Num. xx.. [15] Deut. xxxii. 13. [16] 1 Cor. x. 4.

and therefore, *Laudate Dominum habitatores petræ*, says the prophet[17], You that are inhabitants of this rock, you that dwell in Christ, and Christ in you, you that dwell in this rock, *Praise ye the Lord, bless him, and magnify him for ever. If a son should ask bread of his father, will he give him a stone*, was Christ's question? Yes, O blessed Father, we ask no other answer to our petition, no better satisfaction to our necessity, than when we say, *Da nobis panem, Give us this day our daily bread*, that thou give us this stone, this rock, thyself in thy church, for our direction, thyself in the sacrament, for our refection; what hardness soever we find there, what corrections soever we receive there, all shall be easy of digestion, and good nourishment to us; thy holy spirit of patience shall command, *That these stones be made bread;* and we shall find more juice, more marrow in these stones, in these afflictions, than worldly men shall do in the softness of their oil, in the sweetness of their honey, in the cheerfulness of their wine; for as Christ is our foundation, we believe in him, and as he is our corner-stone, we are at peace with the world in him; as he is Jacob's stone, giving us peace in ourselves, and David's stone, giving us victory over our enemies, so he is a rock of stone, (no affliction, no tribulation shall shake us). And so we have passed through all the benefits proposed to be considered in this first part, as Christ is a stone.

It is some degree of thankfulness, to stand long in the contemplation of the benefit which we have received, and therefore we have insisted thus long upon the first part. But it is a degree of spiritual wisdom too, to make haste to the consideration of our dangers, and therefore we come now to them, we may fall upon this stone, and be broken. This stone may fall upon us, and grind us to powder, and in the first of these, we may consider, *quid cadere*, what the falling upon this stone is: and secondly, *quid frangi*, what it is to be broken upon it: and then thirdly, the latitude of this *unusquisque*, that whosoever falls so, is so broken; first then, because Christ loves us to the end, therefore will we never put him to it, never trouble him till then; as the wise man said of manna, That it had abundance of all pleasure in it, and was meat for all tastes[18]; that is, (as expositors interpret

[17] Isaiah xlii. 11. [18] Wisd. xvi. 24.

it) that manna tasted to every one, like that which every one liked best: so this stone Christ Jesus, hath abundance of all qualities of stone in it, and is all the way such a stone to every man, as he desires it should be. Unto you that believe, saith St. Peter, it is a precious stone, but unto the disobedient, a stone to stumble at: for if a man walk in a gallery, where windows, and tables, and statues, are all of marble, yet if he walk in the dark, or blindfold, or carelessly, he may break his face as dangerously against that rich stone, as if it were but brick; so though a man walk in the true church of God, in that Jerusalem which is described in the Revelation, the foundation, the gates, the walls, all precious stone, yet if a man bring a misbelief, a misconceit, that all this religion is but a part of civil government and order; if a man be scandalized, at that humility, that patience, that poverty, that lowliness of spirit which the Christian religion inclines us unto; if he will say, *Si rex Israel*, If Christ will be king, let him come down from the cross, and then we will believe in him, let him deliver his church from all crosses, first of doctrine, and then of persecution, and then we will believe him to be king; if we will say, *Nolumus hunc regnare*, We will admit Christ, but we will not admit him to reign over us, to be king; if he will be content with a consulship, with a colleagueship, that he and the world may join in the government, that we may give the week to the world, and the Sabbath to him, that we may give the day of the Sabbath to him and the night to our licentiousness, that of the day we may give the forenoon to him, and the afternoon to our pleasures, if this will serve Christ, we are content to admit him, but *nolumus regnare*, we will none of that absolute power, that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must be troubled to think on him, and respect his glory in every thing. If he will say, *Præcepit angelis*, God hath given us in charge to his angels, and therefore we need not to look to our own ways, he hath locked us up safely, and lodged us softly under an eternal election, and therefore we are sure of salvation, if he will walk thus blindly, violently, wilfully, negligently in the true church, though he walk amongst the sapphires, and pearls, and chrysolites, which are mentioned there, that is, in the outward communion and fellowship of God's saints, yet he may

bruise and break, and batter himself, as much against these stones, as against the stone gods of the heathen, or the stone idols of the papists; for first, the place of this falling upon this stone, is the true church; *Qui jacet in terra*, He that is already upon the ground, in no church, can fall no lower, till he fall to hell; but he whom God hath brought into his true church, if he come to a confident security, that he is safe enough in these outward acts of religion, he falls, though it be upon this stone, he erreth, though in the true church. This is the place then, the true church; the falling itself (as far as will fall into our time of consideration now) is a falling into some particular sin, but not such as quenches our faith; we fall so, as we may rise again. St. Hierome expresseth it so, *Qui cadit et tamen credit*, He that falls, but yet believes, that falls and hath a sense of his fall, *reservatur per pœnitentiam ad salutem*, that man is reserved, by God's purpose, to come by repentance, to salvation; for this man that falls there, falls not so desperately, as that he feels nothing between hell and him, nothing to stop at, nothing to check him by the way, *cadit super*, he falls upon something; nor he falls not upon flowers, to wallow and tumble in his sin, nor upon feathers, to rest and sleep in his sin, nor into a cooling river, to disport, and refresh, and strengthen himself in his sin; but he falls upon a stone, where he may receive a bruise, a pain upon his fall, a remorse of that sin he is fallen into: and in this fall, our infirmity appears three ways: the first is *Impingere in lapidem*, to stumble, for though he be upon the right stone in the true religion, and have light enough, yet *Impingimus meridie*, as the prophet saith[19], even at noon we stumble; we have much more light, by Christ being come, than the Jews had, but we are sorry we have it; when Christ hath said to us for our better understanding of the law, *He that looketh and lusteth hath committed adultery, he that coveteth hath stolen, he that is angry hath murdered*, we stumble at this, and we are scandalized with it; and we think that other religions are gentler, and that Christ hath dealt hardly with us, and we had rather Christ had not said so, we had rather he had left us to our liberty and discretion, to look, and court, and to give a way to our passions, as we should find it

[19] Isaiah L. 10.

most conduce to our ease, and to our ends. And this is *impingere*, to stumble, not to go on in an equal and even pace, not to do the will of God cheerfully. And a second degree is *calcitrare*, to kick, to spur at this stone; that is, to bring some particular sin, and some particular law into comparison: to debate thus, if I do not this now, I shall never have such a time; if I slip this, I shall never have the like opportunity; if I will be a fool now, I shall be a beggar all my life: and for the law of God that is against it, there is but a little evil for a great deal of good; and there is a great deal of time to recover and repent that little evil. Now to remove a stone which was a landmark, and to hide and cover that stone, was all one fault in the law; to hide the will of God from our own consciences with excuses and extenuations, this is, *calcitrare*, as much as we can to spurn the stone, the landmark out of the way; but the fulness and accomplishment of this is in the third word of the text, *cadere*, to fall; he falls as a piece of money falls into a river; we hear it fall, and we see it sink, and by and by we see it deeper, and at last we see it not at all: so no man falleth at first into any sin, but he hears his own fall. There is a tenderness in every conscience at the beginning, at the entrance into a sin, and he discerneth awhile the degrees of sinking to: but at last he is out of his own sight, till he meet this stone; (this stone is Christ) that is, till he meet some hard reprehension, some hard passage of a sermon, some hard judgment in a prophet, some cross in the world, something from the mouth, or something from the hand of God, that breaks him: *He falls upon the stone and is broken.*

So that to be broken upon this stone, is to come to this sense, that though our integrity be lost, that we be no more whole and entire vessels, yet there are means of piecing us again: though we be not vessels of innocency, (for who is so?) (and for that enter not into judgment with thy servants O Lord) yet we may be vessels of repentance acceptable to God, and useful to his service; for when anything falls upon a stone, the harm that it suffereth, is not always (or not only) according to the proportion of the hardness of that which it fell upon, but according to the height that it falleth from, and according to that violence that it is thrown with: if their fall who fall by sins of infirmity,

should refer only to the stone they fall upon, (the majesty of God being wounded and violated in every sin) every sinner would be broken to pieces, and ground to powder: but if they fall not from too far a distance, if they have lived within any nearness, any consideration of God, if they have not fallen with violence, taken heart and force in the way, grown perfect in the practice of their sin, if they fall upon this stone, that is, sin, and yet stop at Christ, after the sin, this stone shall break them; that is, break their force and confidence, break their presumption and security, but yet it shall leave enough in them, for the Holy Ghost to unite to his service; yea, even the sin itself, *Co-operabitur in bonum*, as the apostle saith[20], the very fall itself shall be an occasion of his rising: and therefore, though St. Augustine seem to venture far, it is not too far, when he saith, *Audeo dicere*, It is boldly said, and yet I must say it, *Utile est ut caderem in aliquod manifestum peccatum;* A sinner falleth to his advantage, that falleth into some such sin, as by being manifested to the world, manifesteth his own sinful state, to his own sinful conscience too: it is well for that man that falleth so, as that he may thereby look the better to his footing ever after; *Dicit Domino susceptor meus es tu*, says St. Bernard, That man hath a new title to God, a new name for God; all creatures (as St. Bernard enlarges this meditation) can say, *Creator meus es tu*, Lord thou art my Creator; all living creatures can say, *Pastor meus es tu*, Thou art my Shepherd, thou givest me meat in due season; all men can say, *Redemptor meus es tu*, Thou art my Redeemer; but only he which is fallen, and fallen upon this stone, can say, *Susceptor meus es tu*, Only he which hath been overcome by a temptation, and is restored, can say, Lord thou hast supported me, thou hast recollected my shivers, and reunited me; only to him hath this stone expressed, both abilities of stone; first to break him with a sense of his sin, and then to give him peace and rest upon it.

Now there is in this part this circumstance, *Quicunque cadit*, Whosoever falleth; where the *quicunque* is *unusquisque*, whosoever falls, that is, whosoever he be, he falls; *Quomodo de cœlo cecidisti Lucifer?* says the prophet[21], the prophet wonders how

[20] Rom. viii. 28. [21] Isaiah xiv. 12.

Lucifer could fall, having nothing to tempt him (for so many of the ancients interpret that place of the fall of the angels, and when the angels fell, there were no other creatures made), but *Quid est homo aut filius hominis?* Since the father of man, Adam, could not, how shall the sons of him that inherit his weakness, and contract more, and contribute their temptations to one another, hope to stand? Adam fell, and he fell *à longe*, far off, for he could see no stone to fall upon, for when he fell there was no such Messias, no such means of reparation proposed, nor promised when he fell, as now to us; the Blessed Virgin, and the forerunner of Christ, John Baptist, fell too, but they fell *prope*, nearer hand, they fell but a little way, for they had this stone (Christ Jesus) in a personal presence, and their faith was always awake in them; but yet he, and she, and they all fell into some sin. *Quicunque cadit* is *unusquisque cadit*, whosoever falls, is, whosoever he be, he falls, and whosoever falls, (as we said before) is broken; if he fall upon something, and fall not to an infinite depth; if he fall not upon a soft place, to a delight in sin, but upon a stone, and this stone, (no harder, sharper, ruggeder than this, not into a diffidence, or distrust in God's mercy) he that falls so, and is broken so, that comes to a remorseful, to a broken, and a contrite heart, he is broken to his advantage, left to a possibility, yea brought to a nearness of being pieced again, by the word, by the sacraments, and other medicinal institutions of Christ in his church.

We must end only with touching upon the third part, *Upon whom this stone falls, it will grind him to powder;* where we shall only tell you first, *Quid conteri*, What this grinding is; and then, *Quid cadere*, What the falling of this stone is; and briefly this grinding to powder, is to be brought to that desperate and irrecoverable estate in sin, as that no medicinal correction from God, no breaking, no bowing, no melting, no moulding can bring him to any good fashion; when God can work no cure, do no good upon us by breaking us; not by breaking us in our health, for we will attribute that to weakness of stomach, to surfeit, to indigestion; not by breaking us in our states, for we will impute that to falsehood in servants, to oppression of great adversaries, to iniquity of judges; not by breaking us in our honour, for we

will accuse for that, factions, and practices, and supplantation in court; when God cannot break us with his corrections, but that we will attribute them to some natural, to some accidental causes, and never think of God's judgments, which are the true cause of these afflictions; when God cannot break us by breaking our backs, by laying on heavy loads of calamities upon us, nor by breaking our hearts, by putting us into a sad, and heavy, and fruitless sorrow and melancholy for these worldly losses, then he comes to break us by breaking our necks, by casting us into the bottomless pit, and falling upon us there, in this wrath and indignation, *Comminuam eos in pulverem*, saith he, *I will beat them as small as dust before the wind*[23], and tread them as flat as clay in the streets, the breaking thereof shall be like the breaking of a potter's vessel[23], which is broken without any pity. (No pity from God, no mercy, neither shall any man pity them, no compassion, no sorrow:) and in the breaking thereof, saith the prophet, there *is not found a sheard to take fire at the hearth*, nor to take water at the pit; that is, they shall be incapable of any beam of grace in themselves from heaven, or any spark of zeal in themselves, (not a sheard to fetch fire at the hearth) and incapable of any drop of Christ's blood from heaven, or of any tear of contrition in themselves, not a sheard to fetch water at the pit, *I will break them as a potter's vessel, Quod non potest instaurari*, says God in Jeremiah[24], there shall be no possible means (of those means which God hath ordained in his church) to recompact them again, no voice of God's word to draw them, no threatenings of God's judgments shall drive them, no censures of God's church shall fit them, no sacrament shall cement and glue them to Christ's body again; in temporal blessings, he shall be thankful, in temporal afflictions, he shall be obdurate: and these two shall serve, as the upper and nether stone of a mill, to grind this reprobate sinner to powder.

Lastly, this is to be done, by Christ's falling upon him, and what is that? I know some expositors take this to be but the falling of God's judgments upon him in this world; but in this world there is no grinding to power, all God's judgments here,

[23] Psalm xviii. 42. [23] Isaiah xxx. 14. [24] Jer. xix. 11.

(for anything that we can know) have the nature of physic in them, and may, and are wont to cure; and no man is here so absolutely broken in pieces, but that he may be reunited: we choose therefore to follow the ancients in this, that the falling of this stone upon this reprobate, is Christ's last and irrecoverable falling upon him, in his last judgment; that when he shall wish that the hills might fall and cover him, this stone shall fall, and *grind him to powder; He shall be broken, and be no more found*, says the prophet, *yea, he shall be broken and no more sought*[25]: no man shall consider him what he is now, nor remember him what he was before: for, that stone, which in Daniel[26], was cut out without hands (which was a figure of Christ, who came without ordinary generation) when that great image was to be overthrown, broke not an arm or a leg, but brake the whole image in pieces, and it wrought not only upon the weak parts, but it brake all, the clay, the iron, the brass, the silver, the gold; so when this stone falls thus, when Christ comes to judgment, he shall not only condemn him for his clay, his earthly and covetous sins, nor for his iron, his revengeful oppressing, and rusty sins, nor for his brass, his shining, and glittering sins, which he hath filed and polished, but he shall fall upon his silver and gold, his religious and precious sins, his hypocritical hearing of sermons, his singular observing of sabbaths, his pharisaical giving of alms, and as well his subtle counterfeiting of religion, as his atheistical opposing of religion, this stone, Christ himself, shall fall upon him, and a shower of other stones shall oppress him too. *Sicut pluit laqueos*, says David[27], As God rained springs and snares upon them in this world (abundance of temporal blessings to be occasions of sin unto them): so *pluet grandinem*, he shall rain such hail-stones upon them, as shall grind them to powder; there shall fall upon him the natural law, which was written in his heart, and did rebuke him, then when he prepared for a sin; there shall fall upon him the written law, which cried out from the mouths of the prophets in these places, to avert him from sin; there shall fall upon him those sins which he hath done, and those sins which he hath not done, if nothing but want of

[25] Dan. xi. 19. [26] Dan. ii. 45. [27] Psalm xi. 6.

means and opportunity hindered him from doing them; there shall fall upon him those sins which he hath done after another's dehortation, and those, which others have done after his provocation; there the stones of Nineveh shall fall upon him, and of as many cities as have repented with less proportions of mercy and grace, than God afforded him; there the rubbage of Sodom and Gomorrah shall fall upon him, and as many cities as in their ruin might have been examples to him. All these stones shall fall upon him, and to add weight to all these, Christ Jesus himself shall fall upon his conscience, with unanswerable questions, and grind his soul to powder. But *he that overcometh, shall not be hurt by the second death*[28], he that feels his own fall upon this stone, shall never feel this stone fall upon him, he that comes to a remorse, early, and earnestly after a sin, and seeks by ordinary means, his reconciliation to God in his church, is in the best state that man can be in now; for howsoever we cannot say that repentance is as happy an estate as innocency, yet certainly every particular man feels more comfort and spiritual joy, after a true repentance for a sin, than he had in that degree of innocence which he had before he committed that sin; and therefore in this case also we may safely repeat those words of Augustine, *Audeo dicere*, I dare be bold to say, that many a man hath been the better for some sin.

Almighty God, who gives that civil wisdom, to make use of other men's infirmities, give us also this heavenly wisdom, to make use of our own particular sins, that thereby our own wretched conditions in ourselves, and our means of reparation in Jesus Christ, may be the more manifested unto us; to whom with the blessed Spirit, &c.

[28] Rev. ii. 11.

SERMON CXVII.

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S UPON CHRISTMAS-DAY, 1621.

JOHN i. 8.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

IT is an injury common to all the evangelists, (as Irenæus notes) that all their Gospels were severally refused by one sect of heretics or other. But it was proper to St. John alone, to be refused by a sect, that admitted all the other three evangelists, (as Epiphanius remembers) and refused only St. John. These were the Alogiani, a limb and branch of the Arians, who being unable to look upon the glorious splendour, the divine glory, attributed by St. John to this *Logos*, (which gave them their name of Alogiani) this Word, this Christ, not comprehending this mystery, that *this Word was so with God, as that it was God;* they took a round way, and often practised, to condemn all that they did not understand, and therefore refuse the whole Gospel. Indeed his whole Gospel is comprehended in the beginning thereof. In this first chapter is contracted all that which is extensively spread, and dilated through the whole book. For here is first, the foundation of all, the divinity of Christ, to the 15th verse. Secondly, the execution of all, the offices of Christ, to the 35th verse. And then the effect, the working, the application of all, that is, who were to preach all this, to the ends of the world, the calling of his apostles, to the end of the chapter: for the first, Christ's divinity, there is enough expressed in the very first verse alone: for, there is his eternity, intimated in that word, *In principio, In the beginning.* The first book of the Bible, Genesis, and the last book, (that is, that which was last written) this Gospel, begin both with this word, in the beginning. But the last beginning was the first, if Moses' beginning do only denote the Creation, which was not six thousand years since, and St. John's, the eternity of Christ, which no millions, multiplied by millions, can calculate. And then, as his eternity, so his distinction of persons, is also specified in this first verse, when the word, (that is, Christ) is said to have been *apud Deum*, with God.

For, therefore, (says St. Basil) did the Holy Ghost rather choose to say *apud Deum*, then *in Deo*, with God, than in God, *ne auferendæ hypostaseos occasionem daret*, lest he should give any occasion of denying the same nature, in divers persons; for it doth more clearly notify a distinction of persons, to say, He was with him, than to say, He was in him; for the several attributes of God, (mercy and justice, and the rest) are in God, and yet they are not distinct persons. Lastly, there is also expressed in this first verse, Christ's equality with God, in that it is said, *Et verbum erat Deus*, and this word was God. As it was in the beginning, and therefore eternal, and as it was with God, and therefore a distinct person, so it was God, and therefore equal to the Father; which phrase doth so vex and anguish the Arians, that being disfurnished of all other escapes, they corrupted the place, only with a false interpunction, and broke off the words, where they admitted no such pause; for, they read it thus, *Verbum erat apud Deum*; (so far, well) *et Deus erat.* There they made their point; and then followed in another sentence: *Verbum hoc erat in principio*, &c.

The first part then of this chapter, (and indeed of the whole Gospel) is in that first verse the manifestation of his Divine nature, in his eternity, in the distinction of persons, in the equality with the Father. The second part of the chapter layeth down the office of Christ, his prophetical, his priestly, his royal office. For the first, the office of a prophet consisting in three several exercises, to manifest things past, to foretell things to come, and to expound things present. Christ declared himself to be a prophet in all these three: for, for the first, he was not only a verbal, but an actual manifester of former prophecies, for all the former prophecies were accomplished in his person, and in his deeds, and words, in his actions and passion. For the second, his foretelling of future things, he foretold the state of the church, to the end of the world. And for the third (declaring of present things) he told the Samaritan woman, so exquisitely, all her own history, that she gave presently that attestation, *Sir, I see that thou art a prophet*[1]: so his prophetical office, is plainly laid down. For his second office, his priesthood, that is expressed in the thirty-sixth

[1] John iv. 19.

verse, *Behold the Lamb of God;* for, in this, he was our priest, that he was our sacrifice; he was our priest, in that he offered himself for our sins. Lastly, his royal office was the most natural to him of all the rest. The office of a prophet was natural to none; none was born a prophet. Those who are called the children of the prophets, and the sons of the prophets, are but the prophet's disciples. Though the office of priesthood, by being annexed to one tribe, may (in some sense) be called natural, yet in Christ it could not be so, for he was not of that tribe of Levi: so that he had no interest in the legal priesthood, but was a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. But this title to be king, was natural, by descent, he was of the blood royal, and the nearest in succession; so that he, and only he, had, *de jure*, all the three unctions upon him. David had two; he was both a prophet, and a king; he had those two capacities: Melchizedek had two too: he was both a king and a priest; he had two: only Christ had all three, both a prophet, and priest, and king.

In the third part of the chapter, which is the calling of four of his apostles, we may observe that the first that was called, was not Peter, but Andrew; that there might be laid at first some interruption, some stop to their zealous fury, who will still force, and heap up every action which any way concerns St. Peter, to the building up of his imaginary primacy, which primacy, they cared not though Peter wanted, if they could convey that primacy to his successor, by any other title; for which successor's sake it is, and not for St. Peter's own, that they are so over diligent in advancing his prerogative. But, it was not Peter, that was called, but Andrew. In Andrew's present and earnest application of himself to Christ, we may note, (and only so) divers particulars, fit for use and imitation. In his first question, *Master, where dwellest thou?* there is not only, (as Cyril observes) a reverent ascribing to him a power of instructing in that compellation, *Master*, but a desire to have more time afforded to hearken to his instructions, *Where dwellest thou*, that I may dwell with thee? And as soon as ever he had taken in some good portion of knowledge himself, he conceives presently a desire to communicate his happiness with others; and he seeks his brother Peter, and tells him, *Invenimus Messiam, we have found the Messias;* which is, (as

St. Chrysostom notes) *vox quærentis:* in this, that he rejoices in the finding of him, he testifies that he had sought him, and that he had continued in the expectation of a Messias before. *Invenit Messiam*, he had found the Messias; but, saith the text, *Duxit ad Jesum*, he brought his brother the glorious news of having found a king, the King of the Jews, but he led him to Jesus, to a Saviour; that so, all kinds of happiness, temporal and spiritual, might be intimated in this discovery of a king, and of a Saviour; What may not his servants hope for at his hands, who is both those, a king and a Saviour, and hath worldly preferments, and the glory of heaven in his power?

Now, though the words of this text, (*He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light*) are placed in the first part of the chapter, that which concerns Christ's divine nature, yet they belong, and they have a respect to all three; to his divine nature, to his offices, and to his calling of his apostles: for, first, light denotes his divine nature; secondly, the testimony that is given of him by John Baptist, (of whom the words of our text are spoken) declares him to be the Messias, and Messias, (which signifies anointed) involves all his offices, for his three offices, are his three vocations; and thirdly, the application of this testimony, given by John Baptist here, by the apostles and their successors after, intimates or brings to our memory this their first vocation, in this chapter. So that the Gospel of St. John contains all divinity, this chapter all the Gospel, and this text all the chapter. Therefore it is too large to go through at this time; at this time we shall insist upon such branches as arise out of that consideration, what, and who this light is, for we shall find it to be both a personal light, (it is some body) and, otherwise too, a real light, (it is some thing) therefore we inquire, what this light is (what thing) and who this light is, (what person) which John Baptist is denied to be. Hereafter we shall consider, the testimony which is given of this light; in which part in due time, we shall handle, the person of the witness John Baptist, in whom we shall find many considerable, and extraordinary circumstances: and then, his citation, and calling to this testimony; and thirdly, the testimony itself that he gave: and lastly, why any testimony was requisite to so evident a thing as light. But the first part, Who,

and what this light is, belongs most properly to this day, and will fill that portion of the day, which is afforded us for this exercise. Proceed we therefore to that, John Baptist was not that light. Who was, what was?

Though most expositors, as well ancient, as modern agree with one general, and unanime consent, that light in this verse is intended and meant of Christ, Christ is this light; yet in some precedent and subsequent passages in this chapter, I see other senses have been admitted of this word, light, than perchance those places will bear; certainly other than those places need: particularly, in the fourth verse (*In it was life, and that life was the light of men*) there they understand life, to be nothing but this natural life which we breathe, and light to be only that natural life, natural reason, which distinguishes us men from other creatures. Now, it is true that they may have a pretence for some ground of this interpretation in antiquity itself, for, so says St. Cyril, *Filius Dei creative illuminat*, Christ doth enlighten us, in creating us. And so some others of the fathers, and some of the School, understand by that light natural reason, and that life, conservation in life. But this interpretation seems to me subject to both these dangers, that it goes so far, and yet reaches not home. So far, in wresting in divers senses into a word, which needs but one, and is of itself clear enough, that is light, and yet reaches not home, for it reaches not to the essential light, which is Christ Jesus, nor to the supernatural light, which is faith and grace, which seems to have been the evangelist's principal scope, to declare the coming of Christ, (who is the essential light) and his purpose in coming, to raise and establish a church, by faith and grace, which is the supernatural light: for, as the Holy Ghost himself interprets life to be meant of Christ, (*He that hath the Son hath life*[a]) so we may justly do of light too, *he that sees* the Son, the *Son of God hath light*. For, light is never, (to my remembrance) found in any place of the Scripture, where it must necessarily signify the light of nature, natural reason; but wheresoever it is transferred from the natural to a figurative sense, it takes a higher signification than that; either it signifies essential light, Christ Jesus, (which answers our first question, *Quis lux*,

[a] 1 John v. 12.

Who is this light, it is Christ personally) or it signifies the supernatural light of faith and grace, (which answers our second question, *Quid lux*, *What is this light*, for it is the *working of Christ*, by his spirit, in his church, in the infusion of faith and grace, for belief, and manners) and therefore though it be ever lawful, and oftentimes very useful, for the raising and exaltation of our devotion, and to present the plenty, and abundance of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, who satisfies us as with marrow, and with fatness, to induce the divers senses that the Scriptures do admit, yet this may not be admitted, if there may be danger thereby, to neglect or weaken the literal sense itself. For there is no necessity of that spiritual wantonness of finding more than necessary senses; for, the more lights there are, the more shadows are also cast by those many lights. And, as it is true in religious duties, so is it in interpretation of matters of religion, *necessarium et satis convertuntur*; when you have done that you ought to do in your calling, you have done enough; there are no such evangelical counsels, as should raise works of supererogation, more than you are bound to do, so when you have the necessary sense, that is the meaning of the Holy Ghost in that place, you have senses enough, and not till then, though you have never so many, and never so delightful.

Light therefore, is in all this chapter fitliest understood of Christ; who is noted here, with that distinctive article, *Illa lux*, *that light*. For, *non sic dicitur lux, sicut lapis*[3]; Christ is not so called light, as he is called a rock, or a corner-stone; not by a metaphor, but truly, and properly. It is true that the apostles are said to be light, and that with an article, the light; but yet with a limitation and restriction, *The light of the world*[4], that is, set up to convey light to the world. It is true that John Baptist himself was called light, and with large additions, *Lucerna ardens*, *a burning*, and *a shining lamp*[5], to denote both his own burning zeal, and the communicating of this his light to others. It is true, that all the faithful are said to be *light in the Lord*[6]; but all this is but to signify that they had been in darkness before; they had been be-clouded, but were now illustrated; they

[3] Augustine.
[4] Matt. v. 14.
[5] John v. 35.
[6] Eph. v. 8.

were light, but light by reflection, by illustration of a greater light. And as in the first creation, *Vesper et mane dies unus*, *The evening and the morning made the day*, evening before morning, darkness before light, so in our regeneration, when we are made new creatures, the Spirit of God finds us in natural darkness, and by him we are made light in the Lord. But Christ himself, and he only, is *Illa lux*, *vera lux*, *That light*, *the true light*. Not so opposed to those other lights, as though the apostles, or John Baptist, or the faithful, who are called lights, were false lights; but that they were weak lights. But Christ was *fons lucis*, the fountain of all their light; light so, as nobody else was so; so, as that he was nothing but light. Now, neither the apostles, nor John Baptist, nor the elect, no nor the Virgin Mary (though we should allow all that the Roman church ask in her behalf) for the Roman church is not yet come to that seardness, that obdurateness, that impudency, as to pronounce that the Virgin Mary was without original sin, (though they have done many shrewd acts towards it, to the prejudice of the contrary opinion) yet none of these were so light, as they were nothing but light. Moses himself who received and delivered the law, was not so; and to intimate so much, there was an illustration, and irradiation upon his face, but not so of all his body. Nay, Christ Jesus himself, who fulfilled the law, as man, was not so; which he also intimated in the greatest degree of glorification which he accepted upon earth, which was his transfiguration, for, though it be said in that, *That the fashion of his countenance was changed, and his garment was white, and glistered*[f], yet, *Lineamenta Petro agnoscibilia servavit*[g], He kept that former proportion of body, that Peter could know him by it. So that this was not a glorifying of the body, and making it *thorough light;* but he suffered his divine nature to appear and shine through his flesh, and not to swallow, or annihilate that flesh. All other men, by occasion of this flesh, have dark clouds, yea nights, yea long and frozen winter-nights of sin, and of the works of darkness. Christ was incapable of any such nights, or any such clouds, any approaches towards sin; but yet Christ admitted some shadows, some such degrees of human infirmity,

[f] Luke ix. 29. [g] Tertullian.

as by them, he was willing to show, that the nature of man, in the best perfection thereof, is not *vera lux, tota lux*, true light, all light, which he declared in that *Si possibile*, and that *Transeat calix, If it be possible, let this cup pass*[9]; words, to which himself was pleased to allow so much of a retractation, and a correction, *Veruntamen, yet Father*, whatsoever the sadness of my soul have made me say, *Yet, not my will but thine be done; not mine, but thine;* so that they were not altogether, all one; human infirmity made some difference. So that no one man, not Christ, (considered but so as man) was *tota lux*, all light, no cloud. No not mankind, consider it collectively, can be light so, as that there shall be no darkness. It was not so, when all mankind was in one person, in Adam. It is said sometimes in School, that no man can keep the commandments, yet man, collectively, may keep them. They intend no more herein, but that some one man may abstain from doing any act against worshipping of images, another from stealing, another from adultery, and others from others. But if it were possible to compose a man of such elements, as that the principalest virtues, and eminences of all other men, should enter into his composition, and if there could be found a man, as perfect in all particular virtues, as Moses was in meekness, (who was a *meek man, above all the men that were upon the earth*[10]) yet this man would not be *vera lux, tota lux*, true light, all light. Moses was not so meek, but that he slew the Egyptian, nor so meek, but that he disputed and expostulated with God many times, passionately. Every man is so far from being *tota lux*, all light, as that he hath still within him, a dark vapour of original sin, and the cloud of human flesh without him.

Nay not only no man, (for so we may consider him in the whole course of his life) but no one act, of the most perfect, and religious man in the world, though that act employ but half a minute in the doing thereof, can be *vera lux*, true light, all light, so perfect light, as that it may serve another, or thyself, for a lanthorn to his, or thy feet, or a light to his, or thy steps, so that he or thou may think it enough to do so still. For, another man may do so good works, as it may justly work to thy shame, and confusion, and to the aggravating of thy condemnation, that thou

[9] Matt. xxvi. 39. [10] Numb. xii. 3.

livest not as well as he, yet, it would not perchance serve thy turn, to live but so well; for, to whom God gives more, of him he requires more. No man hath *veram lucem*, true light, thorough light; no man hath *meridiem*, *augem*, that high point that casts no shadow, because, besides original sin, that ever smokes up, and creates a soot in the soul, and besides natural infirmities, which become sins, when we consider grace, no man does carry his good actions to that height as, by that grace, which God affords him, he might do. Slacker men have a declination even in their mornings; a west even in their east; coolings, and faintnesses and afternoons, as soon as they have any dawnings, any break of day, any inchoation of any spiritual action or purpose. Others have some farther growth, and increasing, and are more diligent in the observation of spiritual duties; but yet they have not their *meridem*, their *augem*, their noon, their south point, no such height, as that they might not have a higher, by that grace which they have received. In the best degree of our best actions, particularly in this service, which we do to God at this hour, if we brought with us hither a religious purpose to sanctify this festival, if we answer to the callings of his most blessed Spirit, whilst we are here, if we carry away a detestation of our sins, and a holy purpose of amendment of life, this is a good degree of proficiency, and God be blessed, if any of us all arrive to that degree; but yet, this is not *vera lux*, true light, all light; for, who amongst us can avoid the testimony of his conscience, that since he begun this present service to God, his thoughts have not strayed upon pleasures and vanities or profit, and leaped the walls of this church, yea, perchance within the walls of this flesh, which should be the *Temple of the Holy Ghost?* Besides, to become *vera lux*, *tota lux*, true light, thorough light, requires perseverance to the end. So that till our natural light go out, we cannot say that we have this light; for, as the darkness of hell-fire is, so this light of this heavenly fire, must be everlasting. If ever it go clean out, it was never thoroughly kindled, but kindled to our farther damnation; it was never *vera lux*, true light, for, as one office of the law is, but to show sin, so all the light of grace may end in this, to show me my desperate estate, from the abuse of grace. In all philosophy

there is not so dark a thing as light; as the sun, which is *fons lucis naturalis*, the beginning of natural light, is the most evident thing to be seen, and yet the hardest to be looked upon, so is natural light to our reason and understanding. Nothing clearer, for it is clearness itself, nothing darker, it is enwrapped in so many scruples. Nothing nearer, for it is round about us, nothing more remote, for we know neither entrance, nor limits of it. Nothing more easy, for a child discerns it, nothing more hard, for no man understands it. It is apprehensible by sense, and not comprehensible by reason. If we wink, we cannot choose but see it, if we stare, we know it never the better. No man is yet got so near to the knowledge of the qualities of light, as to know whether light itself be a quality, or a substance. If then this natural light be so dark to our natural reason, if we shall offer to pierce so far, into the light of this text, the essential light Christ Jesus, (in his nature, or but in his offices) or the supernatural light of faith and grace, (how far faith may be had, and yet lost, and how far the free-will of man may concur and co-operate with grace, and yet still remain nothing in itself) if we search farther into these points, than the Scripture hath opened us a way, how shall we hope to unentangle, or extricate themselves? They had a precious composition for lamps, amongst the ancients, reserved especially for tombs, which kept light for many hundreds of years; we have had in our age experience, in some casual openings of ancient vaults, of finding such lights, as were kindled, (as appeared by their inscriptions) fifteen or sixteen hundred years before; but, as soon as that light comes to our light, it vanishes. So this eternal, and this supernatural light, Christ and faith, enlightens, warms, purges, and does all the profitable offices of fire, and light, if we keep it in the right sphere, in the proper place, (that is, if we consist in points necessary to salvation, and revealed in the Scripture) but when we bring this light to the common light of reason, to our inferences, and consequences, it may be in danger to vanish itself, and perchance extinguish our reason too; we may search so far, and reason so long of faith and grace, as that we may lose not only them, but even our reason too, and sooner become mad than good. Not that we are bound to believe anything against reason, that is, to believe, we know

not why. It is but a slack opinion, it is not belief, that is not grounded upon reason. He that should come to a heathen man, a mere natural man, uncatechized, uninstructed in the rudiments of the Christian religion, and should at first, without any preparation, present him first with this necessity; Thou shalt burn in fire and brimstone eternally, except thou believe a Trinity of persons, in an unity of one God, except thou believe the incarnation of the second person in the Trinity, the Son of God, except thou believe that a virgin had a Son, and the same Son that God had, and that God was man too, and being the immortal God, yet died, he should be so far from working any spiritual cure upon this poor soul, as that he should rather bring Christian mysteries into scorn, than him to a belief. For, that man, if you proceed so, Believe all, or you burn in hell, would find an easy, an obvious way to escape all; that is, first not to believe hell itself, and then nothing could bind him to believe the rest.

The reason therefore of man, must first be satisfied; but the way of such satisfaction must be this, to make him see, that this world, a frame of so much harmony, so much concinnity and conveniency, and such a correspondence, and subordination in the parts thereof, must necessarily have had a workman, for nothing can make itself: that no such workman would deliver over a frame, and work, of so much majesty, to be governed by fortune, casually, but would still retain the administration thereof in his own hands: that if he do so, if he made the world, and sustain it still by his watchful providence, there belongeth a worship and service to him, for doing so: that therefore he hath certainly revealed to man, what kind of worship and service, shall be acceptable to him: that this manifestation of his will, must be permanent, it must be written, there must be a Scripture, which is his word and his will: and that therefore, from that Scripture, from that Word of God, all articles of our belief are to be drawn.

If then his reason confessing all this, ask farther proof, how he shall know that these Scriptures accepted by the Christian church, are the true Scriptures, let him bring any other book which pretendeth to be the Word of God, into comparison with these; it is true, we have not a demonstration; not such an

evidence as that one and two, are three, to prove these to be Scriptures of God; God hath not proceeded in that manner, to drive our reason into a pound, and to force it by a peremptory necessity to accept these for Scriptures, for then, here had been no exercise of our will, and our assent, if we could not have resisted. But yet these Scriptures have so orderly, so sweet, and so powerful a working upon the reason, and the understanding, as if any third man, who were utterly discharged of all preconceptions and anticipations in matter of religion, one who were altogether neutral, disinterested, unconcerned in either party, nothing towards a Turk, and as little towards a Christian, should hear a Christian plead for his Bible, and a Turk for his Alcoran, and should weigh the evidence of both; the majesty of the style, the punctual accomplishments of the prophecies, the harmony and concurrence of the four evangelists, the consent and unanimity of the Christian church ever since, and many other such reasons, he would be drawn to such an historical, such a grammatical, such a logical belief of our Bible, as to prefer it before any other, that could be pretended to be the Word of God. He would believe it, and he would know why he did so. For let no man think that God hath given him so much ease here, as to save him by believing he knoweth not what, or why. Knowledge cannot save us, but we cannot be saved without knowledge; faith is not on this side knowledge, but beyond it; we must necessarily come to knowledge first, though we must not stay at it, when we are come thither. For, a regenerate Christian, being now a new creature, hath also a new faculty of reason: and so believeth the mysteries of religion, out of another reason, than as a mere natural man, he believed natural and moral things. He believeth them for their own sake, by faith, though he take knowledge of them before, by that common reason, and by those human arguments, which work upon other men, in natural or moral things. Divers men may walk by the sea-side, and the same beams of the sun giving light to them all, one gathereth by the benefit of that light pebbles, or speckled shells, for curious vanity, and another gathers precious pearl, or medicinal amber, by the same light. So the common light of reason illumines us all; but one employs this light upon the searching of impertinent vanities, another by a

better use of the same light, finds out the mysteries of religion; and when he hath found them, loves them, not for the light's sake, but for the natural and true worth of the thing itself. Some men by the benefit of this light of reason, have found out things profitable and useful to the whole world; as in particular, printing, by which the learning of the whole world is communicable to one another, and our minds and our inventions, our wits and compositions may trade and have commerce together, and we may participate of one another's understandings, as well as of our clothes, and wines, and oils, and other merchandise; so by the benefit of this light of reason, they have found out artillery, by which wars come to quicker ends than heretofore, and the great expense of blood is avoided: for the numbers of men slain now, since the invention of artillery, are much less than before, when the sword was the executioner. Others, by the benefit of this light, have searched and found the secret corners of gain, and profit, wheresoever they lie. They have found wherein the weakness of another man consisted, and made their profit of that, by circumventing him in a bargain: they have found his riotous and wasteful inclination, and they have fed and fomented that disorder, and kept open that leak, to their advantage, and the other's ruin. They have found where was the easiest, and most accessible way, to solicit the chastity of a woman, whether discourse, music, or presents, and according to that discovery, they have pursued hers, and their own eternal destruction. By the benefit of this light, men see through the darkest, and most impervious places that are, that is, courts of princes, and the greatest officers in courts; and can submit themselves to second, and to advance the humours of men in great place, and so make their profit of the weaknesses which they have discovered in these great men. All the ways, both of wisdom, and of craft lie open to this light, this light of natural reason: but when they have gone all these ways by the benefit of this light, they have got no further, than to have walked by a tempestuous sea, and to have gathered pebbles, and speckled cockle-shells. Their light seems to be great out of the same reason, that a torch in a misty night, seemeth greater than in a clear, because it hath kindled and inflamed much thick and gross air round about it. So the light and wisdom

of worldly men seemeth great, because he hath kindled an admiration, or an applause in airy flatterers, not because it is so indeed.

But if thou canst take this light of reason that is in thee, this poor snuff, that is almost out in thee, thy faint and dim knowledge of God, that riseth out of this light of nature, if thou canst in those embers, those cold ashes, find out one small coal, and wilt take the pains to kneel down, and blow that coal with thy devout prayers, and light thee a little candle, (a desire to read that book, which they call the Scriptures, and the Gospel, and the Word of God;) if with that little candle thou canst creep humbly into low and poor places, if thou canst find thy Saviour in a manger, and in his swathing-clouts, in his humiliation, and bless God for that beginning, if thou canst find him flying into Egypt, and find in thyself a disposition to accompany him in a persecution, in a banishment, if not a bodily banishment, a local banishment, yet a real, a spiritual banishment, a banishment from those sins, and that sinful conversation, which thou hast loved more than thy parents, or country, or thine own body, which perchance thou hast consumed, and destroyed with that sin; if thou canst find him contenting and containing himself at home in his father's house, and not breaking out, no not about the work of our salvation, till the due time was come, when it was to be done. And if according to that example, thou canst contain thyself in that station and vocation in which God hath planted thee, and not, through a hasty and precipitate zeal, break out to an imaginary and intempestive, and unseasonable reformation, either in civil or ecclesiastical business, which belong not to thee; if with this little poor light, these first degrees of knowledge and faith, thou canst follow him into the garden, and gather up some of the drops of his precious blood and sweat, which he shed for thy soul, if thou canst follow him to Jerusalem, and pick up some of those tears, which he shed upon that city, and upon thy soul; if thou canst follow him to the place of his scourging, and to his crucifying, and provide thee some of that balm which must cure thy soul; if after all this, thou canst turn this little light inward, and canst thereby discern where thy diseases and thy wounds, and thy corruptions are, and canst

apply those tears, and blood and balm to them, (all this is, that if thou attend the light of natural reason, and cherish that, and exalt that, so that that bring thee to a love of the Scriptures, and that love to a belief of the truth thereof, and that historical faith to a faith of application, of appropriation, that as all those things were certainly done, so they were certainly done for thee) thou shalt never envy the lustre and glory of the great lights of worldy men, which are great by the infirmity of others, or by their own opinion, great because others think them great, or because they think themselves so, but thou shalt find, that howsoever they magnify their lights, their wit, their learning, their industry, their fortune, their favour, and *sacrifice to their own nets*[11], yet thou shalt see, that thou by thy small light hast gathered pearl and amber, and they by their great lights nothing but shells and pebbles; they have determined the light of nature, upon the book of nature, this world, and thou hast carried the light of nature higher, thy natural reason, and even human arguments, have brought thee to read the Scriptures, and to that love, God hath set to the seal of faith. Their light shall set at noon; even in their height some heavy damp shall cast a damp upon their soul, and cut off all their succours, and divest them of all comforts, and thy light shall grow up, from a fair hope, to a modest assurance and infallibility, that that light shall never go out, nor the works of darkness, nor the prince of darkness ever prevail upon thee, but as thy light of reason is exalted by faith here, so thy light of faith shall be exalted into the light of glory, and fruition in the kingdom of heaven. Before the sun was made there was a light which did that office of distinguishing night and day; but when the sun was created, that did all the offices of the former light, and more. Reason is that first, and primogenial light, and goes no farther in a natural man; but in a man regenerate by faith, that light does all that reason did, and more; and all his moral, and civil, and domestic, and indifferent actions, (though they be never done without reason) yet their principal scope, and mark is the glory of God, and though they seem but moral, or civil, or domestic, yet they have a deeper tincture, a heavenly nature, a relation to God, in them.

[11] Habak. i. 16.

The light in our text then, is essentially and personally Christ himself, from him flows the supernatural light of faith and grace, here also intended; and because this light of faith and grace, flowing from that fountain of light Christ Jesus, works upon the light of nature, and reason, it may conduce to the raising of your devotions, if we do (without any long insisting upon the several parts thereof) present to you some of those many and divers lights, which are in this world, and admit an application to this light in our text, the essential light, Christ Jesus; and the supernatural light, faith and grace.

Of these lights we shall consider some few couples; and the first pair, *Lux essentiæ*, and *Lux gloriæ*, the light of the *Essence of God*, and the light of the *glory of his saints*. And though the first of these, be that essential light, by which we shall *see God face to face, as he is*, and the effluence and emanation of beams, from the face of God, which make that place heaven, of which light it is said, *That God who only hath immortality, dwells in luce inaccessibili*[12], In the light that none can attain to, yet by the light of faith, and grace in sanctification, we may come to such a participation of that light of essence, or such a reflection of it in this world, that it shall be true of us, which was said of those Ephesians, *You were once darkness, but now are light in the Lord*[13]; he does not say enlightened, nor lightsome, but light itself, light essentially, for *our conversation is in heaven*[14]; and as God says of Jerusalem, and his blessings here in this world, *Calceavi te janthino*, *I have shod thee, with badger's skin*[15], (some translate it) (which the ancients take for some precious stuff) that is, I have enabled thee to tread upon all the most estimable things of this world, (for as the church itself is presented, so every true member of the church is endowed, *Luna sub pedibus*[16], The moon, and all under the moon is under our feet, we tread upon this world, even when we are trodden upon in it) so the *precious promises of Christ, make us partakers of the Divine nature*[17], and the light of faith, makes us the same *spirit with the Lord*[18]; and this is our participation of the light of essence, in this life. The next is the light of glory.

[12] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [13] Eph. v. 8. [14] Phil. iii. 20.
[15] Ezek. xvi. 10. [16] Rev. xii. 1. [17] 2 Pet. i. 4. [18] 1 Cor. vi. 17.

This is that glorification which we shall have at the last day, of which glory, we consider a great part to be in that denudation, that manifestation of all to all; as, in this world, a great part of our inglorious servitude is in those disguises, and palliations, those colours, and pretences of public good, with which men of power and authority apparel their oppressions of the poor; in this are we the more miserable, that we cannot see their ends, that there is none of this denudation, this laying open of ourselves to one another, which shall accompany that state of glory, where we shall see one another's bodies, and souls, actions and thoughts. And therefore, as if this place were now that tribunal of Christ Jesus, and this that day of judgment, and denudation, we must be here, as we shall be there, content to stand naked before him; content that there be a discovery, a revealing, a manifestation of all our sins, wrought upon us, at least to our own consciences, though not to the congregation; if we will have glory, we must have this denudation. We must not be glad, when our sins escape the preacher. We must not say, (as though there were a comfort in that) Though he have hit such a man's adultery, and another's ambition, and another's extortion, yet, for all his diligence, he hath missed my sin; for, if thou wouldest fain have it missed, thou wouldest fain hold it still. And then, why camest thou hither? What camest thou for to church, or to the sacrament? Why dost thou delude God, with this complimental visit, to come to his house, if thou bring not with thee, a disposition to his honour, and his service? Camest thou only to try whether God knew thy sin, and could tell thee of it, by the preacher? Alas, he knows it infallibly; and, if he take no knowledge of his knowing it, to thy conscience, by the words of the preacher, thy state is the more desperate. God sends us to preach forgiveness of sins; where we find no sin, we have no commission to execute; How shall we find your sins? In the old sacrifices of the law, the priest did not fetch the sacrifice from the herd, but he received it from him that brought it, and so sacrificed it for him. Do thou therefore prevent the preacher; accuse thyself before he accuse thee; offer up thy sin thyself; bring it to the top of thy memory, and thy conscience, that he finding it there may sacrifice it for thee; tune the instru-

ment, and it is the fitter for his hand. Remember thou thine own sins, first and then every word that falls from the preacher's lips shall be a drop of the dew of heaven, a dram of the balm of Gilead, a portion of the blood of thy Saviour, to wash away that sin, so presented by thee to be so sacrificed by him; for, if thou only of all the congregation find that the preacher hath not touched thee, nor hit thy sins, know then, that thou wast not in his commission for the remission of sins, and be afraid, that thy conscience is either gangrened, and unsensible of all incisions, and cauterizations, that can be made by denouncing the judgments of God, (which is as far as the preacher can go) or that thy whole constitution, thy complexion, thy composition is sin; the preacher cannot hit thy particular sin, because thy whole life, and the whole body of thy actions is one continual sin. As long as a man is alive, if there appear any offence in his breath, the physician will assign it to some one corrupt place, his lungs, or teeth, or stomach, and thereupon apply convenient remedy thereunto. But if he be dead, and putrefied, no man asks from whence that ill air and offence comes, because it proceeds from thy whole carcase. So, as long as there is in you a sense of your sins, as long as we can touch the offended and wounded part, and be felt by you, you are not desperate, though you be froward, and impatient of our increpations. But when you feel nothing, whatsoever we say, your soul is in a hectic fever, where the distemper is not in any one humour, but in the whole substance; nay, your soul itself is become a carcase. This then is our first couple of these lights, by our conversation in heaven here, (that is, a watchfulness, that we fall not into sin) we have *lucem essentiæ*, possession and fruition of heaven, and of the light of God's presence; and then, if we do, by infirmity, fall into sin, yet, by this denudation of our souls, this manifestation of our sins to God by confession, and to that purpose, a gladness when we hear our sins spoken of by the preacher, we have *lumen gloriæ*, an inchoation of our glorified estate; and then, another couple of these lights, which we propose to be considered, is *lumen fidei*, and *lumen naturæ*, the light of faith, and the light of nature.

Of these two lights, faith and grace, first, and then nature and reason, we said something before, but never too much, because

contentious spirits have cast such clouds upon both these lights, that some have said, Nature doth all alone, and others that Nature hath nothing to do at all, but all is grace: we decline wranglings, that tend not to edification, we say only to our present purpose, (which is the operation of these several couples of lights) that by this light of faith, to him which hath it, all that is involved in phrophecies, is clear and evident, as in a history already done; and all that is wrapped up in promises, is his own already in performance. That man needs not go so high, for his assurance of a Messias and Redeemer, as to the first promise made to him in Adam[19], nor for the limitation of the stock and race from whence this Messias should come: so far as to the renewing of this promise in Abraham[20]: nor for the description of this Messias who should be, and of whom he should be born, as to Essaias[21]; nor to Micheas, for the place[22]; nor for the time when he should accomplish all this, so far as to Daniel[23]; no, nor so far, as to the evangelists themselves, for the history and the evidence that all this that was to be done in his behalf by the Messias, was done sixteen hundred years since. But he hath a whole Bible, and an abundant library in his own heart, and there by this light of faith, (which is not only a knowing, but an applying, an appropriating of all to thy benefit) he hath a better knowledge than all this, than either prophetical or evangelical; for though both these be irrefragable and infallible proofs of a Messias, (the prophetical, that he should, the evangelical, that he is come) yet both these might but concern others: this light of faith brings him home to thee. How sure soever I be, that the world shall never perish by water, yet I may be drowned; and how sure soever that the Lamb of God hath taken away the sins of the world, I may perish without I have this applicatory faith. And as he needs not look back to Esay, nor Abraham, nor Adam, for the Messias, so neither needs he to look forward. He needs not stay in expectation of the angels' trumpets to awaken the dead; he is not to put his *Usque Domine, How long, Lord, wilt thou defer our restitution?* But he hath already died the death of the righteous; which is, to die to sin; he hath already had his burial, by being buried with Christ

[19] Gen. iii. 15. [20] Gen. xii. 3. [21] Isaiah vii. 14.
[22] Micah v. 2. [23] Dan. ix. 12.

in baptism, he hath had his resurrection from sin, his ascension to holy purposes of amendment of life, and his judgment, that is, peace of conscience, sealed unto him, and so by this light of applying faith, he hath already apprehended an eternal possession of God's eternal kingdom. And the other light in this second couple is *lux naturæ*, the light of nature.

This, though a fainter light, directs us to the other, nature to faith: and as by the quantity in the light of the moon, we know the position and distance of the sun, how far, or how near the sun is to her, so by the working of the light of nature in us, we may discern, (by the measure and virtue and heat of that) how near to the other greater light, the light of faith, we stand. If we find our natural faculties rectified, so as that that free will which we have in moral and civil actions, be bent upon the external duties of religion, (as every natural man may, out of the use of that free will, come to church, hear the word preached, and believe it to be true) we may be sure the other greater light is about us. If we be cold in them, in actuating, in exalting, in using our natural faculties so far, we shall be deprived of all light; we shall not see the invisible God in visible things, which St. Paul makes so inexcusable[24], so unpardonable a thing, we shall not see the hand of God in all our worldly crosses, nor the seal of God in all our worldly blessings; we shall not see the face of God in his house, his presence here in the church, nor the mind of God in his gospel, that his gracious purposes upon mankind, extend so particularly, or reach so far, as to include us. I shall hear in the Scriptures, his *Venite omnes*, *Come all*, and yet I shall think that his eye was not upon me, that his eye did not beckon me, and I shall hear the *Deus vult omnes salvos*, *That God would save all*, and yet I shall find some perverse reason in myself, why it is not likely that God will save me. I am commanded *scrutari Scripturas*, *to search the Scriptures;* now, that is not to be able to repeat any history of the Bible without book, it is not to ruffle a Bible, and upon any word to turn to the chapter, and to the verse; but this is *exquisita scrutatio*, the true searching of the Scriptures, to find all the histories to be examples to me, all the prophecies to induce a Saviour for me, all the gospel to apply Christ Jesus to me.

[24] Rom. i. 20.

Turn over all the folds and plaits of thine own heart, and find there the infirmities and waverings of thine own faith, and an ability to say, *Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief*, and then, though thou have no Bible in thy hand, or though thou stand in a dark corner, nay though thou canst not read a letter, thou hast searched that Scripture, thou hast turned to Mark ix. 24. Turn thine ear to God, and hear him turning to thee, and saying to thy soul, *I will marry thee to myself for ever;* and thou hast searched that Scripture, and turned to Hosea ii. 19. Turn to thine own history, thine own life, and if thou canst read there, that thou hast endeavoured to turn thine ignorance into knowledge, and thy knowledge into practice, if thou find thyself to be an example of that rule of Christ's, *If you know these things, blessed are you, if you do them*, then thou hast searched that Scripture, and turned to John xiii. 14. This is *scrutari Scripturas*, to *search the Scriptures*, not as though thou wouldst make a concordance, but an application; as thou wouldst search a wardrobe, not to make an inventory of it, but to find in it something fit for thy wearing. John Baptist was not the light, he was not Christ, but he bore witness of him. The light of faith, in the highest exaltation that can be had, in the elect, here, is not that very beatifical vision, which we shall have in heaven, but it bears witness of that light. The light of nature, in the highest exaltation is not faith, but it bears witness of it. The lights of faith and of nature, are subordinate John Baptists: faith bears me witness, that I have Christ, and the light of nature, that is, the exalting of my natural faculties towards religious uses, bears me witness that I have faith. Only that man, whose conscience testifies to himself, and whose actions testify to the world, that he does what he can, can believe himself, or be believed by others, that he hath the true light of faith.

And therefore, as the apostle saith, *Quench not the Spirit*[15], I say too, *Quench not the light of Nature*, suffer not that light to go out; study your natural faculties; husband and improve them and love the outward acts of religion, though an hypocrite, and though a natural man may do them. Certainly he that loves not the Militant church, hath but a faint faith in his interest in the Triumphant. He that cares not though the material church fall,

[15] 1 Thess. v. 19.

I am afraid is falling from the spiritual. For, can a man be sure to have his money, or his plate, if his house be burnt? Or to preserve his faith, if the outward exercises of religion fail? He that undervalues outward things, in the religious service of God, though he begin at ceremonial and ritual things, will come quickly to call sacraments but outward things, and sermons, and public prayers, but outward things, in contempt. As some Platonic philosophers, did so over refine religion, and devotion, as to say, that nothing but the first thoughts and ebullitions of a devout heart, were fit to serve God in. If it came to any outward action of the body, kneeling, or lifting up of hands, if it came to be but invested in our words, and so made a prayer, nay if it passed but a revolving, a turning in our inward thoughts, and thereby were mingled with our affections, though pious affections, yet, say they, it is not pure enough for a service to God; nothing but the first motions of the heart is for him. Beloved, outward things apparel God; and since God was content to take a body, let not us leave him naked, nor ragged; but, as you will bestow not only some cost, but some thoughts, some study, how you will clothe your children, and how you will clothe your servants, so bestow both cost and thoughts, think seriously, execute cheerfully in outward declarations, that which becomes the dignity of him, who evacuated himself for you. The zeal of his house needs not eat you up, no nor eat you out of house and home; God asks not that at your hands. But, if you eat one dish the less at your feasts for his house' sake, if you spare somewhat for his relief, and his glory, you will not be the leaner, nor the weaker for that abstinence. John Baptist bore witness of the light, outward things bear witness of your faith, the exalting of our natural faculties bear witness of the supernatural. We do not compare the master and the servant, and yet we thank that servant that brings us to his master. We make a great difference between the treasure in the chest, and the key that opens it, yet we are glad to have that key in our hands. The bell that calls me to church does not catechise me, nor preach to me, yet I observe the sound of that bell, because it brings me to him that does those offices to me. The light of nature is far from being enough; but, as a candle may kindle a torch, so into the faculties of nature, well employed,

God infuses faith. And this is our second couple of lights, the subordination of the light of nature, and the light of faith. And a third pair of lights of attestation, that bear witness to the light of our text, is *lux æternorum corporum*, that light which the sun and moon, and those glorious bodies give from heaven, and *lux incensionum*, that light, which those things, that are naturally combustible, and apt to take fire, do give upon earth; both these bear witness of this light, that is, admit an application to it. For, in the first of these, the glorious lights of heaven, we must take nothing for stars, that are not stars; nor make astrological and fixed conclusions out of meteors, that are but transitory; they may be comets and blazing stars, and so portend much mischief, but they are none of those *æterna corpora*, they are not fixed stars, not stars of heaven. So is it also in the Christian church, (which is the proper sphere in which the light of our text, *that light*, the *essential light* Christ Jesus moves by that supernatural light of faith and grace, which is truly the intelligence of that sphere, the Christian church). As in the heavens the stars were created at once, with one *fiat*, and then being so made, stars do not beget new stars, so the Christian doctrine necessary to salvation, was delivered at once, that is, entirely in one sphere, in the body of the Scriptures. And, then as stars do not beget stars, articles of faith do not beget articles of faith; so, as that the council of Trent should be brought to bed of a new creed, not conceived before by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, and, (which is a monstrous birth) the child greater than the father, as soon as it is born, the new creed of the council of Trent to contain more articles, than the old creed of the apostles did. St. Jude writing of the common salvation (as he calls it) (for, St. Jude, it seems, knew no such particular salvation, as that it was impossible for any man to have, salvation is common salvation) exhorts them to *contend earnestly for that faith, which was once delivered to the saints*[26]. *Semel*, once; that is, at once, *semel, simul*, once altogether. For this is also Tertullian's note; that the rule of faith is, that it be *una, immobilis, irreformabilis;* it must not be deformed, it cannot be reformed; it must not be marred, it cannot be mended; Whatsoever needs mending, and

[26] Jude 3.

reformation, cannot be the rule of faith, says Tertullian. *Other foundation can no man lay than Christ*[27]; not only no better, but no other; what other things soever are added by men, enter not into the nature and condition of a foundation. The additions, and traditions, and superedifications of the Roman church, they are not *lux æternorum corporum*, they are not fixed bodies, they are not stars to direct us; they may be meteors, and so exercise our discourse, and argumentation, they may raise controversies: and they may be comets, and so exercise our fears, and our jealousies, they may raise rebellions and treasons, but they are not fixed and glorious bodies of heaven, they are not stars. Their non-communions, (for, communions where there are no communicants, are no communions) when they admit no bread at all, no wine at all, all is transubstantiated, are no communions; their semi-communions, when they admit the bread to be given, but not the wine; their sesqui-communions, bread and wine to the taste, and to all other trials of bread and wine, and yet that bread and wine, the very body, and the very blood of Christ; their quotidian-miracles, which destroy and contradict even the nature of the miracle, to make miracles ordinary, and fixed, constant and certain; (for, as that is not a miracle which nature does, so that is not a miracle which man can do certainly, constantly, infallibly every day, and every day, every priest can miraculously change bread into the body of Christ, and besides they have certain fixed shops, and marts of miracles, in one place a shop of miracles for barrenness, in another, a shop for the tooth-ache). To contract this, their occasional divinity, doctrines to serve present occasions, that in 88, an heretical prince must necessarily be excommunicated[28], and an heretical prince excommunicated must necessarily be deposed, but at another time it may be otherwise, and conveveniences, and dispensations may be admitted, these, and such as these, traditional, occasional, almanack divinity, they may be comets, they may be meteors, they may rain blood, and rain fire, and rain hailstones, hailstones as big as talents, (as it is in the Revelation) millstones, to grind the world by their oppressions, but they are not *lux æternorum corporum*, the light of the stars

[27] 1 Cor. iii. 11.

[28] Elizabeth, by Pope Sixtus Quintus, the abettor of the Spanish armada.

and other heavenly bodies, for they were made at once, and diminish not, increase not. Fundamental articles of faith are always the same. And that is our application of this *lux æternorum corporum*, the light of those heavenly bodies, to the light of our text, Christ working in the church.

Now, for the consideration of the other light in this third couple, which is *lux incensionum*, the light of things, which take, and give light here upon earth, if we reduce it to application and practice, and contract it to one instance, it will appear that the devotion and zeal of him, that is best affected, is, for the most part, in the disposition of a torch, or a knife, ordained to take fire, and to give light. If it have never been lightened, it does not easily take light, but it must be bruised, and beaten first; if it have been lighted and put out, though it cannot take fire of itself, yet it does easily conceive fire, if it be presented within any convenient distance. Such also is the soul of man towards the fires of the zeal of God's glory, and compassion of other's misery. If there be any that never took this fire, that was never affected with either of these, the glory of God, the miseries of other men, can I hope to kindle him? It must be God's work to bruise and beat him, with his rod of affliction, before he will take fire. *Paulus revelatione compulsus ad fidem*[29], St. Paul was compelled to believe; not the light which he saw, but the power which he felt wrought upon him; not because that light shined from heaven, but because it struck him to the earth. *Agnoscimus Christum in Paulo prius cogentem, deinde docentem*[30]; Christ begun not upon St. Paul, with a catechism, but with a rod. If therefore here be any in Paul's case, that were never kindled before, Almighty God proceed the same way with them, and come so near to a friendship towards them, as to be at enmity with them; to be so merciful to them, as to seem unmerciful; to be so well pleased, as to seem angry; that so by inflicting his medicinal afflictions, he may give them comfort by discomfort, and life by death, and make them seek his face, by turning his face from them; and not to suffer them to continue in a stupid inconsideration, and lamentable senselessness of their miserable condition, but bruise and break them with his rod, that they

[29] Hierome. [30] Augustine.

may take fire. But for you, who have taken this fire before, that have been enlightened in both sacraments, and in the preaching of the word; in the means, and in some measure of practice of holiness heretofore, if in not supplying oil to your lamps, which God by his ordinance had kindled in you, you have let this light go out by negligence or inconsideration, or that storms of worldly calamities have blown it out, do but now at this instant call to mind, what sin of yesterday, or the other day, or long ago, begun, and practised, and prevailed upon you, or what future sin, what purpose of doing a sin to-night, or to-morrow, possesses you; do but think seriously what sin, or what cross hath blown out that light, that grace, which was formerly in you, before that sin, or that cross invaded you, and turn your soul, which hath been enlightened before, towards this fire which God's Spirit blows this minute, and you will conceive new fire, new zeal, new compassion. As this *lux incensionum*, kindles easily, when it hath been kindled before, so the soul accustomed to the presence of God in holy meditations, though it fall asleep in some dark corner, in some sin of infirmity, awhile, yet, upon every holy occasion, it takes fire again, and the meanest preacher in the church, shall work more upon him, than the four doctors of the church should be able to do, upon a person who had never been enlightened before, that is, never accustomed to the presence of God in his private meditations, or in his outward acts of religion. And this is our third couple of lights, that bears witness, that is, admit an application to the light of our text; and then the fourth and last couple, which we consider, is *lux depuratarum mixtionum*, the light and lustre of precious stones, and then *lux repercussionum*, the light of repercussion, and reflection, when one body, though it have no light in itself, casts light upon other bodies.

In the application of the first of these lights, *depuratarum mixtionum*, precious stones, we shall only apply their making and their value. Precious stones are first drops of the dew of heaven, and then refined by the sun of heaven. When by long lying they have exhaled, and evaporated, and breathed out all their gross matter, and received another concoction from the sun, then they become precious in the eye, and estimation of men: so

those actions of ours, that shall be precious or acceptable in the eye of God, must at first have been conceived from heaven, from the word of God, and then receive another concoction, by a holy deliberation, before we bring those actions to execution, lest we may have mistaken the root thereof. Actions precious, or acceptable in God's eye, must be holy purposes in their beginning, and then done in season; the dove must lay the egg, and hatch the bird; the Holy Ghost must infuse the purpose, and sit upon it, and overshadow it, and mature and ripen it, if it shall be precious in God's eye. The reformation of abuses in state or church, is a holy purpose, there is that drop of the dew of heaven in it; but if it be unseasonably attempted, and have not a further concoction, than the first motions of our own zeal, it becomes ineffectual. Stones precious in the estimation of men, begin with the dew of heaven, and proceed with the sun of heaven; actions precious in the acceptation of God, are purposes conceived by his spirit, and executed in his time to his glory, not conceived out of ambition, nor executed out of sedition. And this is the application of this *lux depuratarum mixtionum*, of precious stones, out of their making, we proposed another out of their valuation; which is this, that whereas a pearl or diamond of such a bigness, of so many carats, is so much worth, one that is twice as big, is ten times as much worth. So, though God vouchsafe to value every good work thou dost, yet as they grow greater he shall multiply his estimation of them infinitely. When he hath prized at a high rate, the chastity and continency of thy youth, if thou add to this, a moderation in thy middle age, from ambition, and in thy latter age from covetousness and indevotion, there shall be no price in God's treasure (not the last drop of the blood of his Son) too dear for thee, no room, no state in his kingdom (not a jointenancy with his only Son) too glorious for thee. This is one light in this couple; the lustre of precious stones: the other the last is *lux repercussionum*, the light of repercussion, of reflection.

This is, when God's light cast upon us, reflecteth upon other men too, from us; when God doth not only accept our works for ourselves, but employs those works of ours upon other men. And here is a true, and a divine supererogation; which the devil, (as he doth all God's actions, which fall into his compass) did mis-

chievously counterfeit in the Roman church, which he induced their doctrine of supererogation, that a man might do so much more than he was bound to do for God, as that that superplusage might save whom he would; and that if he did not direct them in his intention, upon any particular person, the Bishop of Rome, was general administrator to all men, and might bestow them where he would. But here is a true supererogation; not from man, or his merit, but from God; when our good works shall not only profit us, that do them, but others that see them done; and when we by this light of repercussion, of reflection, shall be made *specula divinæ gloriæ, quæ accipiunt et reddunt*[31], such looking-glasses as receive God's face upon ourselves, and cast it upon others by a holy life, and exemplary conversation.

To end all, we have no warmth in ourselves; it is true, but Christ came even in the winter: we have no light in ourselves; it is true, but he came even in the night. And now, I appeal to your own consciences, and I ask you all, (not as a judge, but as an assistant to your consciences, and *amicus curiæ*,) whether any man have made a good use of this light, as he might have done. Is there any man that in the compassing of his sin, hath not met this light by the way, *Thou shouldst not do this?* Any man, that hath not only as Balaam did, met this light as an angel[32], (that is, met heavenly inspirations to avert him,) but that hath not heard as Balaam did, his own ass; that is, those reasons that used to carry him, or those very worldly respects that used to carry him, dispute against that sin, and tell him, not only that there is more soul and more heaven, and more salvation, but more body, and more health, more honour, and more reputation, more cost, and more money, more labour, and more danger spent upon such a sin, than would have carried him the right way?

They that sleep, sleep in the night, and *they that are drunk, are drunk in the night*[33]. But to you the day-star, the sun of righteousness, the Son of God is risen this day. The day is but a little longer now, than at shortest; but a little it is. Be a little better now, than when you came, and mend a little at every coming, and in less than seven years' apprenticeage, which your

[31] Tertullian. [32] Numb. xxii. 22. [33] 1 Thess. v. 7.

occupations cost you, you shall learn, not the mysteries of your twelve companies, but the mysteries of the twelve tribes, of the twelve apostles, of their twelve articles, whatsoever belongeth to the promise, to the performance, to the imitation of Christ Jesus. He, who is *lux una*, light and light alone, and *lux tota*, light and all light, shall also, by that light, which he sheddeth from himself upon all his, the light of grace, give you all these attestations, all these witnesses of that his light; he shall give you *lucem essentiæ*, (really, and essentially to be incorporated into him, to be made partakers of the Divine nature, and the same spirit with the Lord, by a conversation in heaven, here) and *lucem gloriæ*, (a gladness to give him glory in a denudation of your souls, and your sins, by humble confession to him, and a gladness to receive a denudation and manifestation of yourselves to yourselves, by his messenger, in his medicinal and musical increpations, and a gladness to receive an inchoation of future glory, in the remission of those sins). He shall give you *lucem fidei*, (faithful and unremovable possession of future things, in the present, and make your hereafter, now, in the fruition of God). And *lucem naturæ* (a love of the outward beauty of his house, and outward testimonies of this love, in inclining your natural faculties to religious duties). He shall give you *lucem æternorum corporum*, (a love to walk in the light of the stars of heaven, that never change, a love so perfect in the fundamental articles of religion, without impertinent additions). And *lucem incensionum*, (an aptness to take holy fire, by what hand, or tongue, or pen soever it be presented unto you, according to God's ordinance, though that light have formerly been suffered to go out in you). He shall give you *lucem depuratarum mixtionum*, (the lustre of precious stones, made of the dew of heaven, and by the heat of heaven, that is, actions intended at first, and produced at last, for his glory; and every day multiply their value, in the sight of God, because thou shalt every day grow up from grace to grace). And *lucem repercussionum*, (he shall make you able to reflect and cast this light upon others, to his glory, and their establishment).

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord, with all these lights; that in thy light we may see light; that in this essential

light, which is Christ, and in this supernatural light, which is grace, we may see all these, and all other beams of light, which may bring us to thee, and him, and that blessed spirit which proceeds from both. Amen.

SERMON CXVIII.

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S ON MIDSUMMER DAY, 1622.

JOHN i. 8.

He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light.

OF him, who was this light, which John Baptist is here denied to be, I spoke out of these words, and out of this place, the first time that I ascended to it, upon the great Epiphany, (as the first church used to call it) the manifestation of Christ Jesus in the flesh, Christmas day; I reserved the rest of the text, which concerns John Baptist himself, and his office, for this day, in which the church celebrates his memory, who, though *he were not that light*, was *sent to bear witness of that light.*

We shall make our parts but two, *testem*, and *testimonium*, the person, and the office; first, who the witness is, and then what he witnesses. In the first, we shall consider first, the dignity, the fitness of the person, implied in the first word of this part of our text, *but; he was not that light;* that is true, but yet he was something towards it; he was nothing considered with Christ, but he was much considered with any other man. And then we shall see his title to his office, *missus est*, as he was fit in himself, so he was sent by him that had power to give commission; and from these two, in which we shall determine our first part, the consideration of his person, we shall descend to the other, his office; and therein stop but upon two steps neither; first, why any testimony was required to so clear a thing as light, and such a light, that light; and then, what kind of testimony John

Baptist did give to that light. So have you the design, and frame of our building, and the several partitions, the rooms; pass we now to a more particular survey, and furnishing of them.

The first branch of the first part, is the *idoneus*, that he was fit to be a witness. If we should insist upon the nobility of his race, his father and mother, (his father a priest, and his mother also descended of Aaron) and, as all nations have some notes and marks of nobility, merchandise, or arms, or letters, amongst the Jews, priesthood was that, the priesthood ennobled men[1]; in all well-polished states, *cæteris paribus*, if they were not otherwise defective, they have ever thought it fittest to employ persons of good families, and of noble extraction, as well because, in likelihood they had had the best education, from their parents, and the best knowledge of things that concern the public, by having had their conversation with the best, and most intelligent persons; as also, because they have for the most part, more to lose than inferior persons have, and therefore are likelier to be careful and vigilant in their employment; and again, because they draw a better respect from those to whom they are employed, (which is of great importance in such negotiations, to send persons acceptable to them to whom they are sent) and yet, do not lie so open to the temptations and corruptions of their ministers, as men of needy fortunes, and obscure extractions do.

This fitness John Baptist had, he was of a good family and extraction. It adds to him, that as he had a noble, he had a miraculous birth; for, to be born of a virgin, is but a degree more, than to be born of a barren woman. A birth, which only of all others the church celebrates; for, though we find the days of the martyrs still called, *Natalitia martyrum*, their birth-days, yet that is always intended of the days of their death; only in John Baptist it is intended literally, of his natural birth; for, his spiritual birth, his martyrdom, is remembered by another name, *Decollatio Joannis*, John Baptist's beheading. If we should enlarge all concerning him, as infinitely, as infinite authors have done, or contract all as summarily, as Christ hath done, (*Amongst those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist*[2]) yet we should find that St. Augustine had

[1] Philo Judæus. [2] Luke vii. 28.

done all this before, *Non est quod illi adjiciat homo, cui Deus contulit totum*[3], What man can add more, where God said all, and he hath said of John Baptist, *Spiritu sancto replebitur, He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.*

Two things especially make a man a competent witness: first, that he have in himself a knowledge of the thing that he testifies; else he is an incompetent witness: and then, that he have a good estimation in others, that he be reputed an honest man; else he is an unprofitable witness. If he be ignorant, he says truth, but by chance; if he be dishonest, and say truth, it is but upon design, and not for the truth's sake; for, if those circumstances did not lead him, he would not say truth. John Baptist had both, knowledge and estimation.

He knew, *per scientiam infusam* by infused knowledge; as he was a prophet; for so Christ testifies that he was. But all prophets knew not all things; therefore he was more than a prophet[4], which is also testified by Christ, in his behalf. More than any former prophet. And yet, the prophet Esay was (even in his prophecy) an Evangelist, his prophecy of Christ was so clear, so particular, as that it was rather gospel, and history, than prophecy. John Baptist was more than that; for, he did not only declare a present Christ, (in that, Esay may seem to come near him) but he was *propheta prophetatus*, a prophet that was prophesied of; even Esay himself bore witness of this witness; *A voice cried in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord*[5]. And the prophet Malachi bore witness of this witness too, *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me*[6]. So he hath the testimony of the first and last of the prophets; and of him too, who was the first and the last, the cause and the effect, the moving and fulfilling of all prophecy, of Christ himself, (*This is he, of whom it is written*[7],) and so he cites those words of Malachi concerning John Baptist. John Baptist then had this competency, by knowledge infused by God, declared in former prophecies, he knew the matter, which he was to testify. Which is so essential, so substantial a circumstance in matter of testimony, in what way soever we will be witnesses to God, as that

[3] Augustine. [4] Matt. xi. 9. [5] Isaiah xl. 3.
[6] Mal. iii. 1. [7] Matt. xi. 10.

no man is a competent witness for God, not in his preaching, not in his living, not in his dying, (though he be a witness in the highest sense, that is, a martyr) if he do not know, upon what ground, he says, or does, or suffers that, which he suffers, and does, and says. Howsoever he pretend the honour of God in his testimony, yet, if the thing be materially false, (false in itself, though true in his opinion) or formally false, (true in itself, but not known to be so, to him that testifies it) both ways he is an incompetent witness. And this takes away the honour of having been witnesses for Christ, and the consolation and style of martyrs, both from them, who, upon such evidence, as can give no assurance (that is, traditions of men) have grounded their faith in God, and from them, who take their light in corners, and conventicles, and not from the city set upon the top of a hill, the church of God. Those Roman priests who have given their lives, those Separatists which have taken a voluntary banishment, are not competent witnesses for the glory of God; for a witness must know; and *Qui testatur de scientia, testetur de modo scientiæ*, says the law, he that will prove anything by his own knowledge, must prove how he came by that knowledge; the Papist hath not the knowledge of his doctrine from any Scripture, the Separatist hath not the knowledge of his discipline from any precedent, any example in the Primitive church.

How far then is that wretched and sinful man, from giving any testimony or glory to Christ in his life, who never comes to the knowledge and consideration, why he was sent into this life? who is so far from doing his errand, that he knows not what his errand was; not whether he received any errand or no. But, as though that God, who for infinite millions of ages, delighted himself in himself, and was sufficient in himself, and yet at last did bestow six days' labour for the creation, and provision of man, as though that God, who when man was soured in the lump, poisoned in the fountain, withered in the root, in the loins of Adam, would then engage his Son, his beloved Son, his only Son, to be man, by a temporary life, and to be no man, by a violent and a shameful death, as though that God, who when he was pleased to come to a creation, might have left out thee, amongst privations, amongst nothings, or might have shut thee up, in the close prison, of a

bare being, and no more, (as he hath done earth and stones) or, if he would have given thee life, might have left thee a toad, or, if he would have given thee a human soul, might have left thee a heathen, without any knowledge of God, or, if he had afforded thee a religion, might have left thee a Jew, or, though he had made thee a Christian, might have left thee a Papist; as though that God that hath done so much more, in breeding thee in his true church, had done all this for nothing, thou passest through this world, like a flash, like a lightning, whose beginning or end nobody knows, like an *ignis fatuus* in the air, which does not only not give light for any use, but not so much as portend or signify anything; and thou passest out of the world, as thy hand passes out of a basin of water, which may be somewhat the fouler for thy washing in it, but retains no other impression of thy having been there; and so does the world for thy life in it. When God placed Adam in the world, he bade him fill it, and subdue it, and rule it; and when he placed him in paradise, he bade him dress, and keep paradise; and when he sent his children into the overflowing land of promise, he bade them fight, and destroy the idolaters; to everybody some task, some errand for his glory; and thou comest from him, into this world, as though he had said nothing unto thee, but *Go and do as you see cause, go, and do as you see other men do.*

Thou knowest not, that is, considerest not, what thou wast sent to do, what thou shouldest have done, but thou knowest much less, what thou hast done. The light of nature hath taught thee to hide thy sins from other men, and thou hast been so diligent in that, as that thou hast hid them from thyself, and canst not find them in thine own conscience, if at any time the Spirit of God would burn them up, or the blood of Christ Jesus wash them out; thou canst not find them out so, as that a sermon or sacrament can work upon them. Perchance thou canst tell, when was the first time, or where was the first place, that thou didst commit such or such a sin; but as a man can remember when he began to spell, but not when he began to read perfectly, when he began to join his letters, but not when he began to write perfectly, so thou rememberest when thou wentest timorously and bashfully about sin, at first, and now

perchance art ashamed of that shamefastness, and sorry thou beganst no sooner. Poor bankrupt! that hast sinned out thy soul so profusely, so lavishly, that thou darest not cast up thine accounts, thou darest not ask thyself whether thou have any soul left; how far art thou, from giving any testimony to Christ, that darest not to testify to thyself, nor hear thy conscience take knowledge of thy transgressions, but hadst rather sleep out thy days, or drink out thy days, than leave one minute for compunction to lay hold on; and dost not sin always for the love of that sin, but for fear of a holy sorrow, if thou shouldest not fill up thy time, with that sin. *God cannot be mocked*, saith the apostle, nor God cannot be blinded. He seeth all the way, and at thy last gasp, he will make thee see too, through the multiplying-glass, the spectacle of desperation. Canst thou hope that that God, that seeth this dark earth through all the vaults and arches of the several spheres of heaven, that seeth thy body through all thy stone walls, and seeth thy soul through that which is darker than all those, thy corrupt flesh, canst thou hope that that God can be blinded with drawing a curtain between thy sin and him? When he is all eye, canst thou hope to put out that eye, with putting out a candle? When he hath planted legions of angels about thee, canst thou hope that thou hast taken away all intelligence, if thou have corrupted, or silenced, or sent away a servant? O bestow as much labour, as thou hast done, to find corners for sin, to find out those sins, in those corners where thou hast hid them. As princes give pardons by their own hands, but send judges to execute justice, come to him for mercy in the acknowledgment of thy sins, and stay not till his justice come to thee, when he makes inquisition for blood; and do not think, that if thou feel now at this present a little tenderness in thy heart, a little melting in thy bowels, a little dew in thine eyes, that if thou beest come to know, that thou art a sinner, thou dost therefore presently know thy sins. Thou wouldst have so much tenderness, so much compassion, if thou knewest that he that sits next thee, were in this danger of God's heavy indignation; thou wouldest commiserate thy neighbour's wretched condition so much. But proceed with thyself further, bring this dawning and break of day to a full light, and this little spark to

a perfect acknowledgment of thy sins. Go home, with this spark of God's spirit in you, and there look upon your rentals, and know your oppressions, and extortions; look upon your shop-books, and know your deceits and falsifications; look upon your wardrobes, and know your excesses; look upon your children's faces, and know your fornications. Till then, till you come to this scrutiny, this survey, this sifting of the conscience, if we should cry Peace, peace, yet there were no peace. The orator said, *Imposuimus populo, et oratores visi sumus;* We have cozened the people, and they say we are excellent orators, powerful, well spoken men. We might flatter you, and you would say, we were sweet, and smooth, and comfortable preachers, and we might perish together. But if you study yourselves, read your own history, if you get to the knowledge of your errand hither, and the ill discharge of those duties here, the sorrow and compunction which will grow from thence, is a fair degree of martyrdom, (for as St. Hierome says of chastity, *Habet pudicitia servata, martyrium suum*, Chastity preserved is a continual martyrdom, so a true remorse, if that chastity have not been preserved, and likewise a true remorse for every sin, is a fair degree of martyrdom) for martyr is *testis*, the very name of martyr signifieth a witness; and this martyrdom, this true remorse and sorrow, and compunction for your sins, becomes a witness to yourselves of your reconciliation to God in the merits of Christ Jesus. But we may carry this branch no further, that John Baptist being a competent witness therefore, because he understood the matter he testified, before we can be competent witnesses to our own consciences, of our reconciliation to God, we must understand, (and therefore search into our particular sins) not only that we are sinners, but sinners in such and such kinds, such times, such places, such persons; for that soul, that is content to rest in generals, would but deceive itself. John Baptist's other qualification was, that as he knew the matter about which he was sent, so he had, (and justly) a good estimation amongst them, to whom he was employed.

If I have a prejudice against a man, and suspect his honesty, I shall not be much moved with his testimony. The devil testified for Christ; but, if there were no other testimony but his, I should demur upon the Gospel, I should not die for that faith. John

Baptist was a credible person amongst them. How was this credit acquired? It seemeth John Baptist did no miracles; whether he did or no, is not a clear case; for that which is said, (*John Baptist did no miracles*[8]) is said not by the Evangelist himself; St. John doth not say, that John Baptist did no miracles; but those that resorted to him at that place, said that (*He doth no miracles*[9]) for they had seen none. If he did none, that reason may be good enough, *ne æqualis Christo putaretur*, it was forborne in him, that he might appear to be inferior to Christ. And, if he did none, yet there were miracles done by him. The reformation of manners, and bringing men to repentance, is a miracle. It is a less miracle to raise a man from a sick bed, than to hold a man from a wanton bed, a licentious bed; less to overcome and quench his fever, than to quench his lust. Joseph that refused his mistress was a greater miracle than Lazarus raised from the dead. Of these resurrections, we have divers examples, Joseph's case (I think) is singular. There were miracles done so, by John Baptist preaching to others; and there were miracles done upon himself; and early; for his springing in his mother's womb, was a miracle; and a miracle done for others; *Significatio rei à majoribus cognoscendæ, non à minori cognitæ*[10]; The child catechised his elders, in that which himself understood not; that is, the presence of his Saviour, in the virgin then present, *Divinitus in infante, non humanitus ab infante*, says the same father; It was not a joy, and exultation in the child, but an institution, an instruction to the rest. But miracle or no miracle is not our issue; witnesses for Christ, require not wonder, but belief; we pretend not miracles, but propose God's ordinary means; we look not for admiration, but assent. And therefore forbear your acclamations and expectations of wonderful good preachers, and admirable good sermons. It was enough for John Baptist that even they confessed, that all that he said was true. Content thyself with truths, evident truths, fundamental truths, let matter of wonder and admiration alone.

He was a witness competent to them for his truth, and integrity, and he was so also for the outward holiness of his life; which, for the present, we consider only in the strict and austere

[8] John x. 41. [9] Aquinas. [10] Augustine.

manner of living, that he embraced. For, certainly, he that uses no fasting, no discipline, no mortification, exposes himself to many dangers in himself, and to a cheap and vulgar estimation amongst others. *Caro mea jumentum meum*, says St. Augustine, My body is the horse I ride; *iter ago in Jerusalem*, my business lies at Jerusalem; thither I should ride; *de via conatur excutere*, my horse over-pampered casts me upon the way, or carries me out of the way; *non cohibebo jejunio*, says he; must not that be my way, to bring him to a gentle riding, and more command, by lessening his proportions of provender? St. Augustine means the same that St. Paul preached, *I beat down my body*, says he, *and bring it in subjection*[11]; and, (as Paulinus reads that place) *Lividum reddo, I make my body black and blue;* white and red were not St. Paul's colours. St. Paul was at this time departed, (in outward profession) from the sect of the Pharisees, and from their ostentations of doing their disciplines in the sight and for the praise of man; but yet, being become a Christian he left not his austerity; and it is possible for us, to leave the leaven of the Papist, the opinion of merit, and supererogation, and doing more than we are bound to do in the ways of godliness, and yet nourish our souls, with that wholesome bread of taming our bodies. St. Paul had his disciplines, his mortifications; he tells us so, but he does not tell us what they were; lest perchance a reverence to his person, and example, might bind misdevout men, to do punctually as St. Paul did. The same rule cannot serve all; but the same reason may.

The institution of friars under a certain rule, that all of them, just at this time, shall do just thus, cannot be a rule of justice; but the general doctrine, that everybody needs at some times, some helps, some means, is certainly true. Shall the riotous, the voluptuous man stay till this something be a surfeit or a fever? It is true, this surfeit and this fever, will subdue the body, but then thou doest it not. Shall a lascivious wanton stay, till a consumption, or such contagious diseases as shall make him unsociable, and so, unable to exercise his sin, subdue his body? These can do it, but this is *perimere, non subjugare*[12], not a subduing of the body alone, but a destroying of body and soul

[11] 1 Cor. ix. 27. [12] Ambrose.

together. Moderate disciplines subdue the body, as under the government of a king, a father of his people, that governs them by a law. But when the body comes to be subdued, by pains, and anguish, and loathsome diseases, this becomes a tyranny, a conquest; and he that comes in by conquest, imposes what laws he will; so that these subduings of the body brought in by sin, may work in us, an obduration; we shall feel them, but not discern the hand of God in them; or, if his hand, yet not his hand to that purpose, to relieve us, but to seal our condemnation to us. Beloved, because our adversaries of the Roman heresy, have erroneously made a pattern for their eremitical and monastical life in John Baptist, and coloured their idleness, by his example; some of the Reformation have bent a little too far the other way, and denied, that there was any such austerity in the life of St. John, as is ordinarily conceived: they say that his conversation in the desert, may well be understood to have been but a withdrawing of himself from public and civil businesses, home to his father's house; for his father dwelt in that desert, and thither went Mary to salute Elizabeth[13]. And Joab had his house in this desert[14]; and in this desert are reckoned five or six good towns[15]; so that indeed it was no such savage solitude as they fancy. But yet, for a son of such parents, an only son, so miraculously afforded them, to pass on with that apparel, and that diet, is certainly remarkable, and an evidence of an extraordinary austerity, and an argument of an extraordinary sanctity.

Especially to the Jews it was so; amongst them this austerity of life, and abstaining from those things which other men embraced, procured ordinarily a great estimation; we know that amongst them, the Essæi, a severe sect, had a high reverence[16]: they did not marry, they did not eat flesh, they did not ease themselves by servants, but did all their own work, they used no propriety, they possessed nothing, called nothing their own; *Vicatim habitant, et urbes fugiunt*[17], they forsake all great towns, and dwell in villages; and yet, flying the world, they drew the world so much after them, as that it is noted with wonder, *per sæculorum millia gens æterna, in qua nemo nascitur*[18]; that there

[13] Luc. i. 40. [14] 1 Kings ii. 23. [15] Jos. xv. 61.
[16] Joseph. [17] Philo Jud. [18] Pliny.

was an eternal nation, that had lasted many generations, and yet never born amongst them; *Jam fœcunda illis aliorum vitæ pœnitentia*, for, every man that was crossed or wearied in his own course of life, applied himself to their sect and manner of living, as the only way to heaven. And Josephus writing his own life and forwardness, and pregnancy, (perchance a little too favourably or gloriously in his own behalf, to be thoroughly believed; for he saith, that when he was but fourteen years old, the greatest doctors of the law, came to him to learn *penitiorem sensum juris*, the secretest mysteries of the law; and their law, was divinity) thought himself unperfect till he had spent some time, in the strictness of all the three sects of the Jews; and after he had done all that, he spent three years more, with one Bannus an hermit, who lived in the wilderness, upon herbs and roots, John Baptist's austerity of life made him a competent and credible witness to them, who had such austerity in estimation.

And truly, he that will any way be a witness for Christ, that is, glorify him, he must endeavour, even by this outward holiness of life, to be acceptable to good men. *Vox populi, vox Dei*, the general voice is seldom false; so also *Oculi populi, oculi Dei*, in this case God looketh upon man, as man doth; *Singuli decipi et decipere possunt*, one man may deceive another, and be deceived by another; *Nemo omnes, neminem omnes fefellerunt*, no man ever deceived all the world, nor did all the world ever join to deceive one man. The general opinion, the general voice, is for the most part, good evidence, with, or against a man. Every one of us is ashamed of the praise and attestation of one, whom all the world besides, taketh to be dishonest; so will Christ be ashamed of that witness, that seeketh not the good opinion of good men.

When I see a Jesuit solicit the chastity of a daughter of the house, where he is harboured, and after knowledge taken by the parents, upon her complaint, excuse it with saying, that he did it but to try her, and to be the better assured of her religious constancy; when I see a Jesuit conceal and foment a powder treason, and say he had it but in confession, and then see these men to proclaim themselves to be martyrs, witnesses for Christ in the highest degree; I say still, the devil may be a witness, but I ground not my faith upon that testimony: a competent witness

must be an honest man. This competency John Baptist had, the good opinion of good men; and then, he had the seal of all, *Missus est*, he had his commission, *he was sent to bear witness of that light.*

Though this word *missus est*, he was sent, be not literally in the text here, yet it is necessarily implied, and therefore providently supplied by the translators in this verse, and before in the sixth verse, it is literally expressed, *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.* The law saith, concerning witnesses, *Qui se ingerunt et offerunt suspecti habentur*, Those that offer their testimony before they be cited, are suspicious witnesses. Therefore they must have a mission, a sending. For, by St. Paul's rule, *How can they preach except they be sent*[19]*?* Preach they may; but how? with what success, what effect, what blessing? So that the good success of John Baptist's preaching, (for, the multitudes, *The people came to him*[20]; and not light people carried about with every wind of rumour and noise, and novelty, but Pharisees, and Sadducees[21], men of learning, of sadness and gravity; and not only scholars affected with subtleties, but, publicans too[22], men intent upon the world; and other men, whose very profession submits them to many occasions of departing from the strict rules, which regularly bind other men, and therefore may be in some things, (which taste of injustice) more excusable than other men; *The soldiers likewise came to him, and said, What shall we do?* This his working upon all sorts of men, the blessing that accompanied his labours, was a subsequent argument of his mission, that he was sent by God. God himself argues against them, that were not sent, so, *They were not sent, for they have done no good. I have not sent those prophets*, saith the Lord, *yet they ran, I have not spoken to them, and yet they prophesied;* but, *if they had stood in my counsel, then they should have turned the people from their evil ways*, and *from the wickedness of their inventions*[23]. This note God lays upon them, to whom he affords this vocation of his internal spirit, that though others which come without any calling, may gather men in corners, and in conventicles, and work upon their affections and

[19] Rom. x. 15. [20] Luc. iii. 7. [21] Matt. iii. 7.
[22] Luke iii. 12. [23] Jer. xxiii. 21.

passions, to singularity, to schism, to sedition: and though others which come with an outward, and ordinary calling only, may advance their own fortunes, and increase their estimation, and draw their auditory to an outward reverence of their persons, and to a delight in hearing them rather than other men, yet, those only who have a true inward calling from the Spirit, *shall turn the people from their evil ways, and from the wickedness of their inventions.* To such men's planting and watering God gives an increase; when as others which come to declaim, and not to preach, and to vent their own gifts, or the purposes of great men for their gifts, have only a proportionable reward, wind for wind, acclamation for declamation, popular praise for popular eloquence: for, if they do not truly believe themselves, why should they look that others should believe them? *Qui loquitur ad cor, loquatur ex corde;* He that will speak to the heart of another, must find that that he saith in his own heart first.

When the mission of the church of Rome of priests and Jesuits hither, be sufficient to satisfy their consciences who are so sent, and sent (in intendment of the law) to inevitable loss of life here, hath been laboriously enough debated, and safely enough concluded that such a mission cannot satisfy a rectified conscience. What are they sent for? To defend the immunities of the church[24]: that is, to take away the inherent right of the crown, the supremacy of the king: what seconds them? what assures them? That which is their general tenent[25], that into what place soever the pope may send priests, he may send armies for the security of those priests; and (as another expresses it[26]) in all cases, where the pope may enjoin anything, he may lawfully proceed by way of war against any that hinder the execution thereof. That these missions from the bishop of Rome are unlawful, is safely enough concluded, *à priori*, in the very nature of the commandment and mission. For, it is to a place, in which he that sends hath no power, for it is into the dominions of another absolute king; and it is of persons, in whom he hath no interest, for they are the subjects of another prince; and my neighbour's setting his mark upon my sheep, doth not make my sheep his.

[24] Baronius. [25] Alvarez.
[26] Maynardus. vide Pseudo-Mart. f. 154.

Now, beloved, if that which they cannot make lawful *à priori*, in the nature of the thing, you will make lawful in their behalf, *à posteriori*, in the effect and working thereof; that is, if when these men are thus sent hither, you will run after them to their masses, though you pretend it be but to meet company, and to see who comes, and to hear a church-comedy; if, though you abstain yourself, you will lend them a wife, or a child, or a servant to be present there, *à posteriori*, by this effect, by this their working upon you, you justify their unjust mission, and make them think their sending and coming lawful. So also, (to return to our former consideration) *If you depart not from your evil ways and from the wickedness of your own inventions:* if for all our preaching you proceed in your sins, you will make us afraid, that our mission, our calling is not warrantable, for thereby you take away that consolation, which is one seal of our mission, when we see a good effect of our preaching in your lives. It lies much in you, to convince them, and to establish us, by that way, which is God's own way of arguing, *à posteriori*, by the effect, by our working upon you. If you say God is God, we are sent; if you say Baal is God, you justify their sending. *Missus est*, John Baptist was sent, it appeared by the effect of his preaching; but it appears too, by a divers and manifold citation, which he had received, upon some of which, there may be good use to insist a little.

First, he was cited, called, before he was at all; and called again before he was born; called a third time, out of the desert, into the world; and called lastly out of this world into the next; and by all these callings, these citations, these missions, he was a competent witness. His first citation was before he was anything, before his conception. Out of the dead embers of Zachary's aged loins, and Elizabeth's double obstacle, age and barrenness, when it was almost as great a work as a creation, to produce a child out of the corners, and inwardest bowels of all possibility, and with so many degrees of improbability, as that Zachary, who is said to have been *just before God, and to have walked in all his commandments without reproof*[27], and had, without doubt, often considered the like promise of such a child, made and performed

[27] Luke i. 6.

to Abraham, was yet incredulous of it, and asked, how he should know it. Out of this nothing, or nothing naturally disposed to be such a thing, a child, did God excite, and cite this John Baptist to bear witness of this light, and so made the son of him, who, for his incredulity, was struck with dumbness, all voice. And, beloved, such a citation as this, when thou wast merely nothing, hast thou had too, to bear witness of this light, that is, to do something for the glory of God. When thy free will is as impotent and as dead as Zachary's loins, when thou art under Elizabeth's double obstacle of age and barrenness, (barrenness in good works, age in ill) then when thou thinkest not of God, then when thou art walking for air, or sitting at a feast, or slumbering in a bed, God opens these doors, he rings a bell, he shows thee an example in the concourse of people hither, and here he sets up a man, to present the prayer of the congregation to him, and to deliver his messages to them; and whether curiosity, or custom, or company, or a loathness to incur the penalties of laws, or the censures and observations of neighbours, bring thee hither, though thou hadst nothing to do with God, in coming hither, God hath something to do with thee, now thou art here, and even this is a citation, a calling, by being personally here at these exercises of religion, thou art some kind of witness of his light. For, in how many places of the world had Christ never yet opened such doors for his ordinary service, in all these 1600 years! And in how many places hath he shut up these doors of his true worship, within these three or four years! *Quod citaris huc*, That thou art brought hither, within distance of his voice, within reach of his food, *intra sphœram activitatis*, within the sphere and latitude of his ordinary working, that is, into his house, into his church, this is a citation, a calling, answerable to John Baptist's first calling, from his father's dead loins, and his mother's barren womb; and his second citation was before he was born, in his mother's womb.

When Mary came to visit Elizabeth, the child sprang in her belly, as soon as Mary's voice sounded in her ears[28]. And though naturally, upon excess of joy in the mother, the child may spring in her; yet the evangelist means to tell an extraordinary and

[28] Luke i. 41.

supernatural thing; and whether it were an anticipation of reason in the child, (some of the fathers think so, though St. Augustine do not, that the child understood what he did) or that this were a fulfilling of that prophecy, *That he should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb*, all agree that this was an exciting of him to this attestation of his Saviour's presence, whether he had any sense of it, or no. *Exultatio significat*, says St. Augustine, This springing declared, that his mother, whose forerunner that child should be, was come. And so both Origen, and St. Cyril, refer that commendation, which our Saviour gives him, *Inter natos mulierum, Among those that were born of women, there was not a greater prophet;* that is, none that prophesied before he was born, but he. And such a citation, beloved, thou mayest have, in this place, and at this time. A man may upon the hearing of something that strikes him, that affects him, feel this springing, this exultation, this melting, and colliquation of the inwardest bowels of his soul; a new affection, a new passion, beyond the joy ordinarily conceived upon earthly happinesses; which, though no natural philosopher can call it by a name, no anatomist assign the place where it lies, yet I doubt not, through Christ Jesus, but that many of you who are here now, feel it, and understand it this minute. *Citaris huc*, thou wast cited to come hither, whether by a collateral, and oblique, and occasional motion, or otherwise, hither God hath brought thee, and *citaris hic*, here thou art cited to come nearer to him. Now both these citations were before John Baptist was born; both these affections, to come to this place, and to be affected with a delight here, may be before thy regeneration, which is thy spiritual birth; a man is not born, not born again, because he is at church, nor because he likes the sermon, John Baptist had, and thou must have a third citation; which was in him, from the desert into the public, into the world, from contemplation to practice.

This was that mission, that citation, which most properly belongs to this text, when the word came to the voice, (*the word of God came to John in the wilderness, and he came into all the country preaching the baptism of repentance*[29]). To that we must come, to practise. For, in this respect, an university is but a

[29] Luke iii. 2.

wilderness, though we gather our learning there, our private meditation is but a wilderness, though we contemplate God there, nay our being here, is but a wilderness, though we serve God here, if our service end so, if we do not proceed to action, and glorify God in the public. And therefore *citaris huc*, thou art cited hither, here thou must be, and *citaris hic*, thou art cited here, to lay hold upon that grace which God offers in his ordinance; and *citaris hinc*, thou art cited from hence, to embrace a calling in the world. He that undertakes no course, no vocation, he is no part, no member, no limb of the body of this world; no eye, to give light to others; no ear to receive profit by others. If he think it enough to be excremental nails, to scratch and gripe others by his lazy usury, and extortion, or excremental hair, made only for ornament, or delight of others, by his wit, or mirth, or delightful conversation, these men have not yet felt this third citation, by which they are called to glorify God, and so to witness for him, in such public actions, as God's cause for the present requires, and comports with their calling.

And then John Baptist had a fourth citation to bear witness for Christ, by laying down his life for the truth; and this was that that made him a witness, in the highest sense, a martyr. God hath not served this citation upon us, nor doth he threaten us, with any approaches towards it, in the fear of persecution for religion. But remember that John Baptist's martyrdom, was not for the fundamental rock, the body of the Christian religion, but for a moral truth, for matter of manners. A man may be bound to suffer much, for a less matter than the utter overthrow of the whole frame and body of religion. But leaving this consideration, for what causes a man is bound to lay down his life, consider we now, but this, that a man lays down his life for Christ, and bears witness of him, even in death, when he prefers Christ before this world, when he desires to be dissolved, and be with him, and obeys cheerfully that citation, by the hand of death, whensoever it comes; and that citation must certainly be served upon you all; whether this night in your beds, or this hour, at the door, no man knows. You who were cited hither, to hear, and cited here, to consider, and cited hence, to work in a calling in the world, must be cited from thence too, from the face to the bosom of the

earth, from treading upon other men's, to a lying down in your own graves. And yet that is not your last citation, there is a fifth.

In the grave, John Baptist does, and we must attend a fifth citation, from the grave to a judgment. The first citation hither to church, was served by example of other men, you saw them come, and came. The second citation here, in the church, was served by the preacher, you heard him and believed. The third, from hence, is served by the law, and by the magistrate, they bind you to embrace a profession, and a calling, and you do so. The fourth, which is from thence, from this, to the next world, is served by nature in death, he touches you, and you sink. This fifth to judgment shall be by an angel, by an archangel, by the Lord himself, *The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise*[30]. This citation is not served by a bell, that tolls to bring you hither; not by a man that speaks to instruct you here; not by a law, that compels you to live orderly in the world; not by a bell, that rings out to lay thee in thy grave; but by the great shout of the Lord descending from heaven, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, to raise the dead in Christ. It is not the *aperire fores*, that the Levites have charge to open these doors every day to you[31], that you may come in, (that is your first citation, hither) it is not the *Domine labia mea aperies*[32], that God opens our mouth, the mouth of the preacher, to work upon you, (that is your second citation, here) it is not that *aperimus saccos*[33], the opening of your sack of corn, and finding that, and your money too, that is, your trading in this world, in a calling, (that is your third citation, from hence) nor it is not the *aperuit terra os suum*[34], that the earth opens her mouth, and swallows all in the grave, (that is your fourth citation from thence) it is none of these apertions, these openings; but it is the *aperta monumenta*[35], the grave itself shall be open again; and *aperti cœli*[36], the heavens shall be open, and I shall see the Son of man, the Son of God, and not see him at that distance, that Stephen saw him there, but see him, and

[30] 1 Thes. iv. 16. [31] 2 Chron. ix. 27. [32] Psalm li. 15. [33] Gen. xliii. 21. [34] Num. xvi. 30. [35] Matt. xxvii. 52. [36] Acts vii. 56.

sit down with him. I shall rise from the dead, from the dark station, from the prostration, from the prosternation of death, and never miss the sun, which shall then be put out, for I shall see the Son of God, the sun of glory, and shine myself, as that sun shines. I shall rise from the grave, and never miss this city, which shall be no where, for I shall see the city of God, the new Jerusalem. I shall look up, and never wonder when it will be day, for the angel will tell me that *Time shall be no more*[37], and I shall see, and see cheerfully that last day, the day of judgment, which shall have no night, never end, and be united to the Ancient of Days[38], to God himself, who had no morning, never began. There I shall bear witness for Christ, in ascribing the salvation of the whole world, *to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb*, and Christ shall bear witness for me, in ascribing his righteousness unto me, and in delivering me into his Father's hands, with the same tenderness as he delivered up his own soul, and in making me, who am a greater sinner, than they who crucified him on earth for me, as innocent and as righteous as his glorious self, in the kingdom of heaven. And these occasions of advancing your devotion and edification, from these two branches of this part, first, the fitness of John Baptist to be sent, and then his actual sending, by so divers callings and citations in him, appliable, as you have seen, to us. More will be ministered, in due time, out of the last part, and the two branches of that; first, why this light required any witness, and then, what witness John Baptist gave to this light. But those, because they lead us not to the celebration of any particular festival, (as these two former parts have done, to Christmas and Midsummer) I may have leave to present to you at any other time. At this time let us only beg of God a blessing upon this that hath been said, &c.

[37] Rev. x. 6. [38] Dan. vii. 9.

SERMON CXIX.

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S, 13th OCTOBER, 1622.

JOHN i. 8.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

THIS is the third time that I have entertained you (in a business of this nature, intended for God's service, and your edification, I must not say, troubled you) with this text. I begun it at Christmas, and in that dark time of the year told you who, and what was this light which John Baptist is denied to be. I pursued it at Midsummer, and upon his own day, insisted upon the person of John Baptist, who, though he were not this light, was sent to bear witness of this light. And the third consideration. which (as I told you then) was not tied nor affected to any particular festival, you shall (by God's grace) have now, the office of John Baptist's testimony; and in that, these two parts; first, a problematical part, why so evident a thing as light, and such a light, that light, required testimony of man: and then a dogmatical part, what testimony this man gives of this light. And in the first of these we shall make these two steps, first, why any testimony at all, then why, after so many others, this of John.

First then God made light first, *ut innotescerent omnia*[1], that man might glorify God in seeing the creature, and him in it; for, *frustra fecisset*, (says the same father) it had been to no purpose to have a world, and no light. But though light discover and manifest everything else to us, and itself too, if all be well disposed, yet, in the fifth verse of this chapter, there is reason enough given, why this light in our text, requires testimony; that is, the light shines in darkness, and the darkness comprehends it not; and therefore, *Propter non intelligentes, propter incredulos, propter infirmos, sol lucernas quærit*[2]; For their sakes that are weak in their understanding, and not enlightened in that faculty, the Gentiles; for their sakes who are weak in their faith,

[1] Ambrose. [2] Augustine.

that come, and hear, and receive light, but believe not; for their sakes that are perverse in their manners, and course of life, that hear, and believe, but practise not, *sol lucernas quærit*, this light requires testimony. There may be light then and we not know it, because we are asleep; and asleep so, as Jairus's daughter was, of whom Christ says, *The maid is not dead but asleep*[3]. The maid was absolutely dead; but because he meant forthwith to raise her, he calls it a sleep. The Gentiles, in their ignorance, are dead; we, in our corrupt nature, dead, as dead as they, we cannot hear the voice, we cannot see the light; without God's subsequent grace, the Christian can no more proceed, than the Gentile can begin without his preventing grace. But, because amongst us, he hath established the Gospel, and in the ministry and dispensation thereof, ordinary means for the conveyance of his farther grace, we now are but asleep and may wake. A sudden light brought into a room doth awaken some men; but yet a noise does it better, and a shaking, and a pinching. The exalting of natural faculties, and good moral life, inward inspirations, and private meditations, conferences, reading, and the life do awaken some; but the testimony of the messenger of God, the preacher, crying according to God's ordinance, shaking the soul, troubling the conscience, and pinching the bowels, by denouncing of God's judgments, these bear witness of the light, when otherwise men would sleep it out; and so *propter non intelligentes*, for those that lie in the suds of nature, and cannot, or of negligence, and will not come to hear, *sol lucernas*, this light requires testimony.

These testimonies, God's ordinances, may have wakened a man, yet he may wink, and covet darkness, and grow weary of instruction, and angry at increpation; and, as the *eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight*[4], so the ear of this fastidious and impatient man, longeth for the end of the sermon, or the end of that point in the sermon, which is a thorn to his conscience; but as if a man wink in a clear day, he shall for all that discern light through his eyelids, but not light enough to keep him from stumbling: so the most perverse man that is, either in faith or manners, that winks against the light of nature, or light of the

[3] Matt. ix. 24. [4] Job xxiv. 15.

law, or light of grace exhibited in the Christian church, the most determined atheist that is, discerns through all his stubbornness, though not light enough to rectify him, to save him, yet enough to condemn him, though not enough to enable him, to read his own name in the book of life, yet so much, as makes him afraid to read his own story by, and to make up his own audit and account with God. And doth not this light to this man need testimony, that as he does see, it is a light, so he might see, that there is warmth and nourishment in this light, and so, as well see the way to God by that light, as to see by it, that there is a God; and, this he may, if he do not sleep nor wink; that is, not forbear coming hither, nor resist the grace of God, always offered here, when he is here. *Propter incredulos*, for their sakes, who though they do hear, hear not to believe, *sol lucernas*, this light requires testimony; and it does so too, *propter infirmos*, for their sakes, who though they do hear, and believe, yet do not practise.

If he neither sleep nor wink, neither forbear, nor resist, yet how often may you surprise and deprehend a man, whom you think directly to look upon such an object, yet if you ask him the quality or colour of it, he will tell you, he saw it not! That man sees as little with staring, as the other with winking. His eye hath seen, but it hath returned nothing to the common sense. We may pore upon books, stare upon preachers, yet if we reflect nothing, nothing upon our conversation, we shall still remain under the increpation and malediction of St. Paul[5], out of Esay, *Seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive;* seeing and hearing shall but aggravate our condemnation, and it shall be easier at the day of judgment, for the deaf and the blind that never saw sacrament, never heard sermon, than for us, who have frequented both, *propter infirmos*, for their sakes, whose strength though it serve to bring them hither, and to believe here, doth not serve them to proceed to practice, *sol lucernas*, this light requires testimony.

Yet, if we be neither dead, nor asleep, nor wink, nor look negligently, but do come to some degrees of holiness in practice for a time, yet if at any time, we put ourselves in such a position and distance from this light, as that we suffer dark thick bodies

[5] Acts xxviii. 26.

to interpose, and eclipse it, that is, sadness and dejection of spirit, for worldly losses; nay, if we admit inordinate sadness for sin itself, to eclipse this light of comfort from us, or if we suffer such other lights, as by the corrupt estimation of the world, have a greater splendour to come in; (as the light of knowledge and learning, the light of honour and glory, of popular applause and acclamation) so that this light which we speak of, (the light of former grace) be darkened by the access of other lights, worldly lights, then also you shall find that you need more and more testimony of this light. God is light in the creature, in nature; yet the natural man stumbles and falls, and lies in that ignorance, Christ bears witness of this light, in establishing a Christian church; yet many Christians fall into idolatry and superstition, and lie and die in it. The Holy Ghost hath borne further witness of this light, and, (if we may take so low a metaphor in so high a mystery) hath snuffed this candle, mended this light, in the reformation of religion; and yet there is a damp, or a cloud of uncharitableness, of neglecting, of defaming one another; we deprave even the fiery, the cloven tongues of the Holy Ghost[e]: our tongues are fiery only to the consuming of another, and they are cloven, only in speaking things contrary to one another. So that still there need more witnesses, more testimonies of this light. God the Father is *Pater luminum*, the Father of all lights; God the Son, is *Lumen de lumine*, Light of light, of the Father; God the Holy Ghost is *Lumen de luminibus*, Light of lights, proceeding both from the Father, and the Son; and this light the Holy Ghost kindles more lights in the church, and drops a coal from the altar upon every lamp, he lets fall beams of his Spirit upon every man, that comes in the name of God, into this place; and he sends you one man to-day, which beareth witness of this light *ad ignaros*, that bends his preaching to the convincing of the natural man, the ignorant soul, and works upon him. And another another day, that bears witness *ad incredulos*, that fixeth the promises of the Gospel, and the merits of Christ Jesus, upon that startling and timorous soul, upon that jealous and suspicious soul, that cannot believe that those promises, or those merits appertain to him, and so bends all the power of his sermon to the

[e] Acts ii. 3.

binding up of such broken hearts, and faint believers. He sendeth another to bear witness *ad infirmos*, to them who though they have shaked off their sickness, yet are too weak, to walk, to them, who though they do believe, are intercepted by temptations from preaching, and his sermon reduces them from their ill manners, who think it enough to come, to hear, to believe. And then he sendeth another *ad relapsos*, to bear witness of this light to them who have relapsed into former sins, that the merits of Christ are inexhaustible, and the mercies of God in him indefatigable: as God cannot be deceived with a false repentance, so he cannot resist a true, nor be weary of multiplying his mercies in that case. And therefore think not that thou hast heard witnesses enow of this light, sermons enow, if thou have heard all the points preached upon, which concern thy salvation. But because new clouds of ignorance, of incredulity, of infirmity, of relapsing, rise every day and call this light in question, and may make thee doubt whether thou have it or no, every day, (that is, as often as thou canst) hear more and more witnesses of this light; and bless that God, who for thy sake, would submit himself to these *testimonia ab homine*, these testimonies from men, and being all light himself, and having so many other testimonies, would yet require the testimony of man, of John; which is our other branch of this first part.

Christ, (who is still the light of our text, that light, the essential light) had testimony enough without John. First, he bore witness of himself. And though he say of himself, (*If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true*[7]) yet that he might say either out of a legal and proverbial opinion of theirs, that ordinarily they thought, that a witness testifying for himself, was not to be believed, whatsoever he said; or, as man, (which they then took him to be) he might speak it of himself out of his own opinion, that, in judicature it is a good rule, that a man should not be believed in his own case. But, after this, and after he had done enough to make them see, that he was more than man, by multiplying of miracles, then he said, *though I bear witness of myself, my witness is true*[8]. So the only infallibility and unreproachable evidence of our election, is in the inward word of God,

[7] John v. 31. [8] John viii. 13.

when *his Spirit bears witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God*; for, if the spirit, (the spirit of truth) says he is in us, he is in us. But yet the Spirit of God is content to submit himself to an ordinary trial, to be tried by God and the country; he allows us to doubt, and to be afraid of our regeneration, except we have the testimony of sanctification. Christ bound them not to his own testimony, till it had the seal of works, of miracles; nor must we build upon any testimony in ourselves, till other men, that see our life, testify for us to the world.

He had also the testimony of his Father (the *Father himself which hath sent me, beareth witness of me*[9].) But where should they see the Father, or hear the Father speak? That was all which Philip asked at his hands, *Lord show us the Father, and it sufficeth us*[10]. He had the testimony of an angel, who came to the shepherds so, as nowhere in all the Scriptures, there is such an apparition expressed, (the *angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them*[11],) but where might a man talk with this angel, and know more of him? As St. Augustine says of Moses, *Scripsit et abiit*, he hath written a little of the creation, and he is gone; *Si hic esset, tenerem, et rogarem*, if Moses were here, says he, I would hold him fast, till I had got him to give me an exposition of that which he writ. For, beloved, we must have such witnesses, as we may consult farther with. I can see no more by an angel, than by lightning. A star testified of him, at his birth. But what was that star? Was it any of those stars that remain yet? Gregory Nyssen thinks it was, and that it only then changed the natural course, and motion for that service. But almost all the other fathers think, that it was a light but then created, and that it had only the form of a star, and no more; and some few, that it was the Holy Ghost in that form. And, if it were one of the fixed stars, and remain yet, yet it is not now in that office, it testifies nothing of Christ now. The wise men of the East testified of him, too; but what were they, or who, or how many, or from whence, were they; for, all these circumstances have put antiquity itself into more distractions, and more earnest disputations, than circumstances should do. Simeon testified of him, who had a revela-

[9] John v. 37. [10] John xiv. 8. [11] Luke ii. 8.

tion from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, till he had seen Christ[18]. And so did the Prophetess Anna, who served God, with fasting and prayer, day and night. *Omnis sexus et ætas*[19], both sexes, and all ages testified of him; and he gives examples of all, as it was easy for him to do. Now after all these testimonies, from himself, from the Father, from the angel, from the star, from the wise men, from Simeon, from Anna, from all, what needed the testimony of John? All those witnesses had been thirty years before John was cited for a witness, to come from the wilderness and preach. And in thirty years, by reason of his obscure and retired life, in his father Joseph's house, all those personal testimonies of Christ might be forgotten; and, for the most part, those witnesses only testified that he was born, that he was come into the world, but for all their testimony, he might have been gone out of the world long. Before this, he might have perished in the general flood, in that flood of innocent blood, in which Herod drowned all the young children of that country. When therefore Christ came forth to preach, when he came to call apostles, when he came to settle a church, to establish means for our ordinary salvation, (by which he is the light of our text, the essential light shining out in his church, by the supernatural light of faith and grace) then he admitted, then he required *Testimonium ab homine*, Testimony from man. And so, for our conformity to him, in using and applying those means, which convey this light to us, in the church, we must do so too; we must have the seal of faith, and of the Spirit, but this must be in the testimony of men; still there must be that done by us, which must make men testify for us.

Every Christian is a state, a commonwealth to himself, and in him, the Scripture is his law, and the conscience is his judge. And though the Scripture be inspired from God, and the conscience be illumined and rectified by the Holy Ghost immediately, yet, both the Scriptures and the conscience admit human arguments. First, the Scriptures do, in all these three respects; first that there are certain Scriptures, that are the revealed will of God. Secondly, that these books which we call canonical, are those Scriptures. And lastly, that this and this is the true sense

[18] Luke ii. 25. [19] Ambrose.

and meaning of such and such a place of Scripture. First, that there is a manifestation of the will of God in certain Scriptures, if we who have not power to infuse faith into men, (for that is the work of the Holy Ghost only) but must deal upon the reason of men, and satisfy that, if we might not proceed, *per testimonia ab homine*, by human arguments, and argue, and infer thus, that if God will save man for worshipping him, and damn him for not worshipping him, so as he will be worshipped, certainly God hath revealed to man, how he will be worshipped, and that in some visible, in some permanent manner in writing, and that that writing is Scripture, if we had not these testimonies, these necessary consequences derived even from the natural reason of man to convince men, how should we convince them, since our way is not to create faith, but to satisfy reason? And therefore let us rest in this testimony of men, that all Christian men, nay Jews and Turks too, have ever believed, that there are certain Scriptures, which are the revealed will of God, and that God hath manifested to us, in those Scriptures, all that he requires at our hands for faith or manners. Now, which are those Scriptures?

As for the whole body entirely together, so for the particular limbs and members of this body, the several books of the Bible, we must accept *testimonium ab homine*, human arguments, and the testimony of men. At first, the Jews were the depositaries of God's oracles; and therefore the first Christians were to ask the Jews, which books were those Scriptures. Since the church of God is the master of those rolls, no doubt but the church hath *testimonium à Deo*, the Spirit of God to direct her, in declaring what books make up the Scripture; but yet even the church, which is to deal upon men, proceedeth also *per testimonium ab homine*, by human arguments, such as may work upon the reason of man, in declaring the Scriptures of God. For the New Testament, there is no question made of any book, but in conventicles of Anabaptists; and for the Old, it is testimony enough that we receive all that the Jews received. This is but the testimony of man, but such as prevails upon every man. It is somewhat boldly said, (not to permit to ourselves any severer, or more bitter animadversion upon him) by a great man in the Roman

church[14], that perchance the Book of Enoch, which St. Jude cites in his epistle, was not an apocryphal book, but canonical Scripture in the time of the Jews. As though the Holy Ghost were a time-server, and would sometimes issue some things, for present satisfaction, which he would not avow nor stand to after; as though the Holy Ghost had but a lease for certain years, a determinable estate in the Scriptures, which might expire, and he be put from his evidence; that that book might become none of his, which was his before. We therefore, in receiving these books for canonical, which we do, and in post-posing the apocryphal, into an inferior place, have *testimonium ab homine*, testimony from the people of God, who were, and are the most competent, and unreproachable witnesses herein: and we have *testimonium ab inimico*, testimony from our adversary himself, *Perniciosius est ecclesiæ librum recipere pro sacro, qui non est, quam sacrum rejicere*[15], It is a more pernicious danger to the church, to admit a book for canonical, which is not so, than to reject one that is so. And therefore, *Ne turberis novitie*, (saith another great author of theirs[16]) Let no young student in divinity be troubled, *Si alicubi repererit, libros istos supputari inter canonicos*, if he find at any time, any of these books reckoned amongst the canonical, *Nam ad Hieronymi limam, verba doctorum et conciliorum reducenda*, For saith he, Hierome's file must pass over the doctors, and over the councils too, and they must be understood, and interpreted according to St. Hierome. Now this is but *testimonium ab homine*, St. Hierome's testimony, that prevailed upon Cajetan, and it was but *testimonium ab homine*, the testimony of the Jews, that prevailed upon St. Hierome himself.

It is so for the whole body, the Bible; it is so for all the limbs of this body, every particular book of the Bible; and it is so for the soul of this body, the true sense of every place, of every book thereof; for, for that, (the sense of the place) we must have *testimonium ab homine*, the testimony, that is, the interpretation of other men. Thou must not rest upon thyself, nor upon any private man. John was a witness that had witnesses, the prophets had prophesied of John Baptist. The men from whom we

[14] Melchilanus (qu. Melchior Canus?—ED.)
[15] Idem ex Aquin.
[16] Cajetan.

are to receive testimony of the sense of the Scriptures, must be men that have witnesses, that is, a visible and outward calling in the church of God. That no sense be ever admitted, that derogateth from God, that makes him a false, or an impotent, or a cruel God, that every contradiction, and departing from the analogy of faith, doth derogate from God, and divers such grounds, and such inferences, as every man confesses, and acknowledges to be naturally and necessarily consequent, these are *testimonia ab homine*, testimonies that pass like current money, from man to man, obvious to every man, suspicious to none. Thus it is in the general; but then, when it is deduced to a more particular trial, (what is the sense of such or such a place) when Christ saith, *Scrutamini Scripturas*[17], Search the Scriptures, *Non mittit ad simplicem lectionem, sed ad scrutationem exquisitam*, It is not a bare reading, but a diligent searching, that is enjoined us. Now they that will search, must have a warrant to search; they upon whom thou must rely for the sense of the Scriptures, must be sent of God by his church. Thou art robbed of all, divested of all, if the Scriptures be taken from thee; thou hast nowhere to search; bless God therefore, that hath kept thee in possession of that sacred treasure, the Scriptures; and then, if any part of that treasure lie out of thy reach, or lie in the dark, so as that thou understandest not the place, search, that is, apply thyself to them that have warrant to search, and thou shalt lack no light necessary for thee. Either thou shalt understand that place, or the not understanding of it shall not be imputed to thee, nor thy salvation hindered by that ignorance.

It is but to a woman that St. Hierome saith, *Ama Scripturas, et amabit te Sapientia*, Love the Scriptures, and Wisdom will love thee: the weakness of her sex must not avert her from reading the Scriptures. It is instruction for a child, and for a girl, that the same father giveth, *Septem annorum discat memoriter Psalterium*, As soon as she is seven years old, let her learn all the Psalms without book; the tenderness of her age, must not avert her from the Scriptures. It is to the whole congregation, consisting of all sorts and sexes, that St. Chrysostom saith, *Hortor, et hortari non desinam*, I always do, and always will

[17] John v. 39.

exhort you, *ut cum domi fueritis, assiduæ lectioni Scripturarum vacetis*, that at home, in your own houses, you accustom yourselves to a daily reading of the Scriptures. And after, to such men as found, or forced excuses for reading them, he saith with compassion, and indignation too, *O homo, non est tuum Scripturas evolvere, quia innumeris curis distraheris?* Busy man, belongeth it not to thee to study the Scriptures, because thou art oppressed with worldly business? *Imo magis tuum est*, saith he, therefore thou hadst the more need to study the Scriptures; *Illi non tam egent*, &c., They that are not disquieted, nor disordered in their passions, with the cares of this world, do not so much need that supply from the Scriptures, as you that are, do. It is an author that lived in the obedience of the Roman church[18], that saith, the Council of Nice did decree, That every man should have the Bible in his house. But another author in that church saith now[19], *Consilium Chrysostomi ecclesia nunc non arridet;* The church doth not now like Chrysostom's counsel, for this general reading of the Scriptures, *Quia etsi illi locutus ad plebem, plebs tunc non erat hæretica;* Though St. Chrysostom spoke that to the people, the people in his time were not an heretical people: and are the people in the Roman church now an heretical people? If not, why may not they pursue St. Chrysostom's counsel, and read the Scriptures? Because they are dark? It is true, in some places they are dark; purposely left so by the Holy Ghost, *ne semel lectas fastidiremus*[20], lest we should think we had done when we had read them once; so saith St. Gregory too, In plain places, *fami occurrit*, he presents meat for every stomach; in hard and dark places, *fastidia detergit*, he sharpens the appetite: *Margarita est, et undique perforari potest*[21]; The Scripture is a pearl, and might be bored through everywhere. Not everywhere by thyself; there may be many places, which thou of thyself canst not understand; not everywhere by any other man; no not by them, who have warrant to search, commission from God, by their calling, to interpret the Scriptures, not everywhere by the whole church, God hath reserved the understanding of some places of Scripture, till the time come for the fulfilling of those

[18] Corn. Agrip. [19] Escalante.
[20] Augustine. [21] Hierome.

prophecies; as many places of the Old Testament were not understood, till Christ came, in whom they were fulfilled. If therefore thou wilt needs know, whether, when St. Paul took his information of the behaviour of the Corinthians, from those of Chloe[22], whether this Chloe were a woman, or a place, the fathers cannot satisfy thee, the latter writers cannot satisfy thee, there is not *testimonium ab homine*, no such human arguments as can determine thee, or give thee an acquittance; the greatest pillars whom God hath raised in his church, cannot give a satisfaction to thy curiosity. But if the doctrine of the place will satisfy thee, which doctrine is, that St. Paul did not give credit to light rumours against the Corinthians, nor to clandestine whisperers, but tells them who accused them, and yet, as well as he loved them, he did not stop his ears against competent witnesses (for he tells them, they stood accused, and by whom), then thou mayest bore this pearl through, and make it fit for thy use, and wearing, in knowing so much of St. Paul's purpose therein, as concerns thy edification, though thou never know, whether Chloe were a woman, or a place. *Tantum veritati obstrepit adulter sensus, quam corruptor stylus*[23]; A false interpretation may do thee as much harm, as a false translation, a false commentary, as a false copy; and therefore, forbearing to make any interpretation at all, upon dark places of Scripture (especially those, whose understanding depends upon the future fulfilling of prophecies), in places that are clear, and evident thou mayest be thine own interpreter; in places that are more obscure, go to those men, whom God hath set over thee, and either they shall give thee that sense of the place, which shall satisfy thee, by having the sense thereof, or that must satisfy you, that there is enough for your salvation, though that remain uninterpreted. And let this *testimonium ab homine*, this testimony of man, establish thee for the Scripture, that there is a Scripture, a certain book, that is the word, and the revealed will of God; that these books which we receive for canonical, make up that book; and then, that this and this is the true sense of every place, which the Holy Ghost hath opened to the present understanding of his church.

[22] 1 Cor. i. 11. [23] Tertullian.

We said before, that a Christian being a commonwealth to himself, the Scripture was his law, (and for that law, that Scripture, he was to have *testimonium ab homine*, the testimony of man) and then, his conscience is his judge, and for that he is to have the same testimony too. Thou must not rest upon the testimony and suggestions of thine own conscience; *nec illud de trivio paratum habere*, thou must not rest in that vulgar saying, *Sufficit mihi*, &c.[24] As long as mine own conscience stands right, I care not what all the world say. Thou must care what the world says, and study to have the approbation and testimony of good men. Every man is enough defamed in the general depravation of our whole nature: Adam hath cast an infamy upon us all: and when a man is defamed, it is not enough that he purge himself by oath, but he must have compurgators too: other men must swear, that they believe he swears a truth. Thine own conscience is not enough, but thou must satisfy the world, and have *testimonium ab homine*, good men must think thee good. A conscience that admits no search from others, is *cauterizata*, burnt with a hot iron; not cured, but seared; not at peace, but stupified. And when in the verse immediately before our text it is said, *That John came to bear witness of that light*, it is added, that *through him*, (that is, through that man, through John, not through it, through that light) that *through him all men believe*. For though it be efficiently the operation of the light itself, (that is, Christ himself) that all men believe yet the Holy Ghost directs us to that that is nearest us, to this testimony of man, that instrumentally, ministerially works this belief in men. If then for thy faith, thou must have *testimonium ab homine*, the testimony of men, and mayest not believe as no man but thyself believes, much more for thy manners, and conversation. Think it not enough to satisfy thyself, but satisfy good men; nay weak men; nay malicious men: till it come so far, as that for the desire of satisfying man, thou leave God unsatisfied, endeavour to satisfy all, God must weigh down all; thyself and others; but as long as thyself only art in one balance, and other men in the other, let this preponderate; let the opinion of other men weigh down thine own opinion of thyself. It is true, (but many men flatter

[24] Hierome.

themselves too far with this truth) that it is a sin, to do anything in *conscientia dubia*, when a man doubts whether he may do it, or no, and in *conscientia scrupulosa*, when the conscience hath received any single scruple, or suspicion to the contrary, and so too in *conscientia opinante*, in a conscience that hath conceived but an opinion, (which is far from a debated, and deliberate determination) yea in *conscientia errante*, though the conscience be in an error, yet it is sin to do a right against the conscience; but then, as it is a sin, to do against the conscience labouring under any of these infirmities, so is it a greater sin, not to labour to recover the conscience, and divest it of those scruples, by their advice, whom God hath indued with knowledge and power, for that purpose. For, (as it is in civil judicature) God refers causes to them, and according to their reports, God's ordinary way is to decree the cause, to loose where they loose, to bind where they bind. Their imperfections, or their corruptions God knows how to punish in them; but thou shalt have the recompense of thy humility and thy obedience to his ordinance, in hearkening to them, whom he hath set over thee, for the rectifying of thy conscience. Neither is this to erect a parochial papacy, to make every minister a pope in his own parish, or to re-enthral you to a necessity of communicating all your sins, or all your doubtful actions to him; God forbid. God of his goodness hath delivered us from that bondage, and butchery of the conscience, which our fathers suffered from Rome, and *anathema*, and *anathema maranatha*[25], cursed be he till the Lord comes, and cursed when the Lord comes, that should go about to bring us in a relapse, in an eddy, in a whirlpool, into that disconsolate estate, or into any of the pestilent errors of that church. But since you think it no diminution to you, to consult with a physician for the state of your body, or with a lawyer for your lands, since you are not born, nor grown good physicians, and good lawyers, why should you think yourselves born, or grown so good divines, that you need no counsel, in doubtful cases, from other men? And therefore, as for the law that governs us, that is, the Scripture, we go the way that Christ did, to receive the testimony of man, both for the body, that Scriptures there are, and for the limbs of that body,

[25] 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

that these books make up those Scriptures, and for the soul of this body, that this is the sense of the Holy Ghost in that place; so, for our judge, which is the conscience, let that be directed beforehand, by their advice whom God hath set over us, and settled, and quieted in us, by their testimony, who are the witnesses of our conversation. And so we have done with our problematical part; we have asked and answered both these questions, Why this light requires any testimony, (and that is because exhalations and damps, and vapours arise, first from our ignorance, then from our incredulity, after from our negligence in practising, and lastly, from our slipperiness in relapsing, and therefore we need more and more attestations, and remembrances of this light) and the other question, Why after so many other testimonies, (from himself, from his Father, from the angel, from the star, from the Magi, from Simeon, from Anna, from many, many, very many more) he required this testimony of John; and that is, because all those other witnesses had testified long before, and because God in all matters belonging to religion here, or to salvation hereafter, refers us to man, but to man sent, and ordained by God, for our direction, that we may do well; and to the testimony of good men, that we have done well. And so we pass to our dogmatical part, what his testimony was; what John Baptist and his successors in preaching, and preparing the ways of Christ, are sent to do; he was sent *to bear witness of that Light.*

Princes which send ambassadors, use to give them a commission, containing the general scope of the business committed to them, and then instructions, for the fittest way to bring that business to effect. And upon due contemplation of both these, (his commission and his instructions) arises the use of the ambassador's judgment and discretion, in making his commission, and his instructions, (which do not always agree in all points, but are often various, and perplexed) serve most advantageously towards the ends of his negociation. John Baptist had both; therefore they minister three considerations unto us; first, his commission, what that was; and then his instructions, what they were; and lastly, the execution, how he proceeded therein.

His commission was drawn up, and written in Esay, and recorded and entered into God's rolls by the evangelists. It was,

To prepare the way of the Lord, to make straight his paths[26], that therefore *every valley should be exalted, every mountain made low;* and all this he was to cry out, to make them inexcusable, who contemn the outward ministry, and rely upon private inspirations. This commission lasts during God's pleasure; and God's pleasure is, that it should last to the end of the world; therefore are we also joined in commission with John, and we cry out still to you to all those purposes.

First, that you prepare the way of the Lord. But when we bid you do so, we do not mean, that this preparing or predisposing of yourselves, is in yourselves, that you can prevent God's preventing grace, or mellow, or supple, or fit yourselves for the entrance of that grace, by any natural faculty in yourselves. When we speak of a co-operation, a joint working with the grace of God, or of a post-operation, an after working upon the virtue of a former grace, this co-operation, and this post-operation must be mollified with a good concurrent cause with that grace. So there is a good sense of co-operation, and post-operation, but pre-operation, that we should work, before God work upon us, can admit no good interpretation. I could as soon believe that I had a being before God was, as that I had a will to good, before God moved it. But then, God having made his way into you, by his preventing grace, prepare that way, not your way, but his way, (says our commission) that is, that way that he hath made in you, prepare that by forbearing and avoiding to cast new hindrances in that way. In sadness and dejections of spirit, seek not your comfort in drink, in music, in comedies, in conversation; for this is but a preparing a way of your own. To prepare the Lord's way, is to look, and consider, what way the Lord hath taken, in the like cases, in the like distresses with other servants of his, and to prepare that way in thyself, and to assure thyself, that God hath but practised upon others, that he might be perfect when he comes to thee, and that he intends to thee, in these thy tribulations, all that he hath promised to all, all that he hath already performed to any one. Prepare his way; apply that way, in which he hath gone to others, to thyself.

And then, by our commission we cry out to you, to make

[26] Isaiah XL. 3. Mark i. 2.

straight his paths. In which we do not require, that you should absolutely rectify all the deformities and crookednesses, which that *Tortuositas serpentis*[27], the winding of the old serpent hath brought you to; for, now the stream of our corrupt nature, is accustomed to that crooked channel, and we cannot divert that, we cannot come to an absolute directness, and straightness, and profession in this life; and, in this place, the Holy Ghost speaks but of a way, a path; not of our rest in the end, but of our labour in the way. Our commission then is not to those sinless men, that think they have nothing for God to forgive; but when we bid you make straight his paths, (as before we directed you, to take knowledge what his ways towards others had been) so here we intend, that you should observe, which is the Lord's path into you, by what way he comes oftenest into you, who are his temple, and do not look that door, do not pervert, do not cross, do not deface that path. The ordinary way, even of the Holy Ghost, for the conveying of faith, and supernatural graces, is (as the way of worldly knowledge is) by the senses: where his way is by the ear, by hearing his word preached; do not thou cross that way of his, by an inordinate delight, in hearing the eloquence of the preacher; for, so thou hearest the man, and not God, and goest thy way, and not his. God hath divers ways into divers men; into some he comes at noon, in the sunshine of prosperity; to some in the dark and heavy clouds of adversity. Some he affects with the music of the church, some with some particular collect or prayer; some with some passage in a sermon, which takes no hold of him, that stands next him. Watch the way of the Spirit of God, into thee; that way which he makes his path, in which he comes oftenest to thee, and by which thou findest thyself most affected, and best disposed towards him, and pervert not that path, foul not that way. Make straight his paths, that is, keep them straight; and when thou observest, which is his path in thee, (by what means especially he works upon thee) meet him in that path, embrace him in those means, and always bring a facile, a fusil, a ductile, a tractable soul, to the offers of his grace, in his way.

Our commission reaches to the exalting of your valleys, *Let*

[27] Tertullian.

every valley be exalted; in which, we bid you not to raise yourselves in this world, to such a spiritual height, as to have no regard to this world, to your bodies, to your fortunes, to your families. Man is not all soul, but a body too; and, as God hath married them together in thee, so hath he commanded them mutual duties towards one another; and God allows us large uses of temporal blessings, and of recreations too. To exalt valleys, is not to draw up flesh, to the height of spirit; that cannot be, that should not be done. But it is to draw you so much towards it, as to consider (and consider with an application) that the very law, which was but the schoolmaster to the Gospel, was given upon a mountain; that Moses could not so much as see the land of promise, till he was brought up into a mountain; that the inchoation of Christ's glory, which was his transfiguration, was upon a mountain; that his conversation with God in prayer; that his return to his eternal kingdom by his ascension, was so too, from a mountain; even his exinanition, his evacuation, his lowest humiliation, his crucifying was upon a mountain; and he calls, even that humiliation, and exaltation, *Si exaltatus, If I be exalted, lifted up*, says Christ[28], signifying what death he should die. Now, if our depressions, our afflictions be exaltations, (so they were to Christ, so they are to every good Christian) how far doth God allow us, an exalting of our valleys, in a considering with a spiritual boldness, the height and dignity of mankind, and to what glory God hath created us. Certainly man may avoid as many sins, by this exalting his valleys, this considering the height and dignity of his nature, as by the humblest meditations in the world. For, upon those words of Job[29], *Manus tuæ fecerunt me*, St. Gregory says, *Misericordiæ judicis, dignitatem suæ conditionis opponit;* Job presents the dignity of his creation, by the hand of God, as an inducement why God should regard him; it is not his valley, but his mountains, that he brings into God's sight; not that dust which God took into his hands, when he made him, but that person which the hands of God had made of that dust. Man is an abridgment of all the world; and as some abridgments are greater, than some other authors, so is one man of more dignity, than all the earth. And therefore exalt

[28] John xii. 32. [29] Job xx. 8.

thy valleys, raise thyself above the pleasures that this earth can promise. And above the sorrows, it can threaten too. A painter can hardly diminish or contract an elephant into so little a form, but that that elephant, when it is at the least, will still be greater than an ant at the life, and the greatest. Sin hath diminished man shrewdly, and brought him into a narrower compass; but yet, his natural immortality, (his soul cannot die) and his spiritual possibility, even to the last gasp, of spending that immortality in the kingdom of glory, and living for ever with God, (for otherwise, our immortality were the heaviest part of our curse) exalt this valley, this clod of earth, to a noble height. How ill husbands then of this dignity are we by sin, to forfeit it by submitting ourselves to inferior things? either to gold, than which every worm, (because a worm hath life, and gold hath none) is in nature, more estimable, and more precious; or, to that which is less than gold, to beauty; for there went neither labour, nor study, nor cost to the making of that; (the father cannot diet himself so, nor the mother so, as to be sure of a fair child) but it is a thing that happened by chance, wheresoever it is; and, as there are diamonds of divers waters, so men enthral themselves in one clime to a black, in another to a white beauty. To that which is less than gold or beauty, voice, opinion, fame, honour, we sell ourselves. And though the good opinion of good men, by good ways, be worth our study, yet popular applause, and the voice of inconsiderate men, is too cheap a price to set ourselves at. And yet, it is hardly got too; for as a ship that lies in harbour within land, sometimes needs most of the points of the compass, to bring her forth: so if a man surrender himself wholly to the opinion of other men, and have not his *criterium*, his touchstone within him, he will need both north and south, all the points of the compass, the breath of all men; because, as there are contrary elements in every body, so there are contrary factions in every place, and when one side cries him up, the other will depress him, and he shall, (if not shipwreck) lie still. But yet we do forfeit our dignity, for that which is less than all, than gold, than beauty, than honour; for sin; sin which is but a privation, (as darkness is but a privation) and privations are

nothing. And therefore exalt every valley, consider the dignity of man in his nature, and then, in the Son of God his assuming that nature, which gave it a new dignity, and this will beget in thee a pride that God loves, a valuing of thyself above all the temptations of this world.

But yet exalt this valley temperately, consider and esteem this dignity modestly, for our commission goes farther, not only to the exalting of every valley, but, *Omnis mons humiliabitur*, *Every mountain must be made low:* which is not to bring our mountainous, and swelling affections, and passions, to that flatness, as that we become stupid, and insensible. Mortification is not to kill nature, but to kill sin. Bring therefore your ambition to that bent, to covet a place in the kingdom of heaven, bring your anger, to flow into zeal, bring your love to enamour you of that face, which is fairer than the children of men, that face, on which the angels desire to look, Christ Jesus, and you have brought your mountains to that lowness, which is intended, and required here.

Now, this commission, John Baptist was, and we are, to publish *in deserto*, in the desert, in the wilderness; that is, as St. Hierome notes, not in Jerusalem, in a tumultuary place, a place of distraction, but in the desert, a place of solitude, and retiredness. And yet this does not imply an abandoning of society, and mutual offices, and callings in the world, but only informs us, that every man is to have a desert in himself, a retiring into himself, sometimes of emptying himself of worldly businesses, and that he spend some hours in such solitudes, and lay aside, (as one would lay aside a garment) the lawyer, the physician, the merchant, or whatsoever his profession be, and say, *Domine hic sum*, Lord, I am here, I, he whom thou madest, and such as thou madest him, not such as the world hath made me, *Hic sum*, I am here, not where the affairs of the world scatter me, but here, in this retiredness, Lord, I am here, command what thou wilt; in this retiredness, in this solitude, (but is not a court, is not an army, is not a fair a solitude, in respect of this association, when God and a good soul are met?) but in this home solitude, in this home desert, are we commanded to publish this commission, as the fittest time to make impressions of all the

parts thereof, *Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths, exalt your vallies, and bring down your mountains.* And this was John Baptist's commission, what to do; and then he had instructions with his commission, how to do it; which is another consideration.

His commission was long before in Esay, so he was *legatus natus*, born an ambassador; his instructions were delivered to him by God immediately, when *The word of God came unto John, in the wilderness*[30]. Princes oftentimes vary their instructions from their commissions, and to perplex their ambassadors. God proceeded with John Baptist, and doth with us, directly. Our commission is to conform you to him, our instructions are to do that, that way, by preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins. It is, in a word, by the word and sacraments. First, he sends us not as spies, to lie, and learn, nor to learn and lie; but to deal apertly, manifestly, to publish, to preach; which as it forbids forcible and violent pressing the conscience by secular or ecclesiastical authority, so it forbids clandestine and whispering conventicles; it is a preaching, a working by instructing and informing the understanding; it is a preaching, a public avowing of God's ordinance, in a right calling. He gives us not our instructions to offer peace and reconciliation to all, and yet he not mean it to all; he bids us preach unto all; he bids all hearers repent, and he allows us to set to his seals of reconcilation, to all that come as penitents. He knows who will, and who will not repent, we do not; but both he knows, and so do we, that all may, so far as that, if they do not, they find enough in themselves to condemn themselves, and to discharge God and us. Our instructions are to preach, that is our way, and to preach repentance; there begin you in your own bosoms: he that seeks upwards to a river, is sure to find the head; but he that upon every bubbling spring, will think to find a river, by that may err many ways. If thou repent truly, thou art sure to come up to God's decree for thy salvation; but if thou begin above at the decree, and say, I am saved, therefore I shall repent, thou mayest miss both. Repent, and you shall have the seals; the seals are the sacraments;

[30] Luke iii. 2.

John's was baptism; but to what? He baptized to the amendment of life. This then is the chain; we preach, you repent; then we give you the seals, the sacraments, and you plead them, that is, declare them in a holy life; for, till that (sanctification) come, preaching, and repentance, and seals, are ineffectual. A good life inanimates all. And so, having done with his commission, what he was to do, and his instructions, how he was to do it, we pass to our last branch, in this last part, the execution of his commission, and instructions, what, and how he did it, what testimony he gave of this light.

First, he testified, *se non esse*, that he was not this light, this Christ, this Messias. And secondly, *Christum esse*, that this light, this Christ, this Messias was come into the world, there was no longer expectation: and lastly, *hunc esse*, that this particular person whom he designed and specified in the *ecce agnus, behold the Lamb of God*, was this light, this Christ, this Messias. He was not, one was, Christ was; in these three consists his testimony. First, he testified that himself was not the Messias, he confessed and denied not, and said plainly, *I am not the Christ*[31]. Therefore, lest John Baptist might be over-valued, and their devotions fixed and determined in him, St. Augustine enlarges this consideration, *Erat mons illustratus, non ipse sol;* John Baptist was a hill, and a hill gloriously illustrated by the sun, but he was not that sun; *Mirare, mirare, sed tanquam montem;* John Baptist deserves a respect, and a regard; but regard him, and respect him but as a hill, which though high, is but the same earth; and *Mons in tenebris est, nisi luce vestiatur*, A hill hath no more light in itself, than the valley, till the light invest it; *Si montem esse lucem putas, in monte naufragium facies;* If you take the hill, because it shines, to be the light itself, you shipwreck upon the top of a hill. If we rest in the person, or in the gifts of any man, to what height soever this hill be raised in opinion, or in the church, still we mistake; John Baptist, men of the greatest endowments, and goodness too, are but instruments, they are not the workman himself. And therefore as they are most inexcusable, that put an infallibility in the breast of one man (our adversaries of Rome), so do they transgress too far that way, that

[31] John i. 20.

run, and pant, and thirst after strange preachers, and leave their own church deserted, and their own pastor discouraged; for some one family, by the greatness thereof, or by the estimation thereof, may induce both those inconveniences. Truly, though it may seem boldly said, it may be said safely, that we were better hear some weaknesses from our own pastor, than some excellencies from another; go farther, some mistakings from our own, than some truths from another; for all truths are not necessary; nor all mistakings pernicious; but obedience to order is necessary, and all disorder pernicious. Now what a way had John Baptist open to him, if he had been popularly disposed. Amongst a people, that at that time expected their Messias (for, all the prophecies preceding his coming were then fulfilled), and such a Messias as should be a temporal king, and had invested an opinion, that he, John Baptist, was that Christ, what rebellions, what earthquakes, what inundations of people might he have drawn after him, if he would have countenanced and cherished their error to his advantage? They would have lacked no Scriptures, to authorize their actions. They would have found particular places of the prophets, to have justified any act of theirs, in advancing their Messias, then expected. Therein he is our pattern; not to preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus; not to preach for admiration, but for edification; not to preach to advance civil ends, without spiritual ends; to promote all the way the peace of all Christian kingdoms, but to refer all principally to the kingdom of peace, and the king of peace, the God of heaven. He confessed, and denied not, and said plainly, *I am not the Christ;* that was his testimony; we confess, and deny not, and say plainly, That our own parts, our own passions, the purpose of great persons, the purpose of any state, is not Christ; we *preach Christ Jesus, and him crucified;* and whosoever preaches any other Gospel, or any other thing for Gospel, let him be accursed.

I am not the man, says John Baptist, for, that man is God too; but yet that man, that God, that Messias consisting of both, is come, though I be not he. *There is one amongst you, whom you know not, whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to loose*[88]. In which,

[88] John i. 26.

he says all this; *There is one among you;* you need seek no farther; all the promises, and prophecies (the *semen mulieris*, that the *seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head;* the appropriation to Abraham, *In semine tuo, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed:* the fixation upon David, *Donec Shiloh*, till Shiloh come; Esay's *Virgo concipiet, Behold a virgin shall conceive;* Micah's *et tu Bethlem*, that Bethlem should be the place, Daniel's seventy hebdomades, that that should be the time), all promises, all prophecies, all computations are at an end, the Messias is come.

Is he come, and amongst you, and do you not know him? What will make you know him? You believe you need a Messias; you cannot restore yourself. You believe this Messias must come at a certain time, specified by certain marks; were all these marks upon any other? Or lacks there any of these in him? Do you thus magnify me, and neglect a person, *whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to loose?* John Baptist was a prophet, more than a prophet, the greatest of the sons of women: Who could be so much greater than he, and not the Messias? We must necessarily enwrap all these three in one another, and into one another they do easily and naturally fall: he testifies that he was not the man (he preaches not himself), he testifies that that man is come (future expectations are frivolous); and he testifies, that the characters and marks of the expected Messias, can fall upon none but this man, and therefore he delivers him over to them with that confidence, *Ecce agnus Dei, Behold the Lamb of God*, there you may see him; and this is his testimony.

These three, we, we to whom John Baptist's commission is continued, testify too. First, we tell you, what is not Christ; austerity of life, and outward sanctity is not he; John Baptist had them abundantly, but yet permitted not, that they should have that opinion of him. But yet, much less is chambering and wantonness, and persevering in sin, that Christ, or the way to him. We tell you, *stetit in medio*, he hath been amongst you, you have heard him preached in your ears; yea, ye have heard him knock at your hearts, and for all that, we tell you that you have not known him. Which, though it be the discomfortablest

thing in the world, (not to have known Christ in those approaches) yet we tell it you somewhat to your comfort, and to your excuse, for, *had you known it, you would not have crucified the Lord of glory*[33], as we do all, by our daily sins. And though God have winked at these times of ignorance[34], (pretermitted your former inconsiderations) now, he commandeth all men everywhere to repent. And therefore, that thou mayest know, even thou, (as Christ iterates it) at least in this thy day[35], the things which belong to thy peace, we tell you who he is, and where he is; *Ecce agnus Dei, Behold the Lamb of God*, Here, here in this his ordinance he supplicates you, when the minister, how mean soever, prays you, in his stead, *be ye reconciled to God*[36]. Here he proclaims, and cries to you, *Venite omnes, Come all that are weary and heavy laden.* Here he bleeds in the Sacrament, here he takes away the sins of the world, in deriving a jurisdiction upon us, to bind and loose upon earth, that which he will bind and loose in heaven. This we testify to you; do you but receive this testimony. Till you hear that voice of consummation in heaven, *Venite benedicti, come ye blessed*, you shall never hear a more comfortable Gospel than this, which was preached by Christ himself, the *Spirit of the Lord is upon me, to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the acceptable year of the Lord*[37]: for this was not a deliverance from their brickmaking in Egypt, not from their scorns and contempts in Babylon, but a deliverance from that unexpressible, that unconceivable bondage of sin, and death, not by the hand of a Moses, but a Messias. *Optat dare qui præcipit petere*[38], he that commands us to ask, would fain give: *Cupit largiri, qui desiderat postulari*, he that desires us to pray to him, hath that ready, and a readiness to give that, that he bids us pray for. If the king give a general pardon, will any man be so suspiciously treacherous in his own behalf, as to say, for all this large extent of his mercy, he meant not me, and therefore I will sue out no pardon? If the king cast a donative, at his coronation, will any man lie still and say, he meant none of that money to me? When the master of the feast sent his servants for guests,

[33] 1 Cor. ii. 8. [34] Acts xvii. 30. [35] Luke xix. 42.
[36] 2 Cor. v. 20. [37] Luke iv. 16. & Isaiah lxi. 1. [38] Augustine.

had it become those poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind, to have stood and disputed with the steward, and said, Surely, sir, you mistook your master, your master did not mean us? Why should any man think that God means not him? When he offers grace, and salvation to all, why not to him? Should God exclude him as a man? Why, God made him good, and, as a man and his creature, he is good still. But, *non Deus Esau hominem odit, sed odit Esau peccatorem*[39]? God did not hate Esau, as he was a man, but as he was a sinner. Should he exclude him as a sinner? Why then he should receive none, for we are all so; and he came for none but such, but sinners[40]. *Perfectiorum est nihil in peccatore odiisse præter peccata*[41], To hate nothing in a sinner, but his sin, is a great degree of perfection; God is that perfection; he hates nothing in thee but thy sin; and that sin he hath taken upon himself, and sees it not in thee. Should he exclude thee because thou art impenitent, because thou hast not repented? Do it now. *Peccasti, pœnitere*[42], Hast thou sinned? repent. *Millies peccasti? millies pœnitere?* Hast thou multiplied thy sins by thousands? multiply thy penitent tears so too. Should he exclude thee, because thou art impenitible, thou canst not repent; how knowest thou thou canst not repent? Dost thou try, dost thou endeavour, dost thou strive? why, this, this holy contention of thine is repentance. Discredit not God's evidence; he offers thee *testimonium ab homine*, the testimony of man, of the man of God, the minister, that the promises of the Gospel belong to thee. Judge not against that evidence; confess that there is *no other name given under heaven*, to be *saved, but the name of Jesus*[43], and that that is. And then, when thou hast thus admitted his witnesses to thee, that his preaching hath wrought upon thee, be thou his witness to others, by thy exemplary life, and holy conversation. In this chapter, in the calling of the apostles some such thing is intimated, when of those two disciples, which, upon John's testimony, followed Christ, one is named, (Andrew[44]) and the other is not named. No doubt, but the other is also written in the book of life, and long since enjoys the blessed fruit of that his forward-

[39] Augustine. [40] Mar. ii. 17. [41] Augustine.
[42] Chrysostom. [43] Acts iv. 12. [44] John i. 40.

ness. But in the testimony of the Gospel, written for posterity, only Andrew is named, who sought out his brother Simon, and drew him in, and so propagated the church, and spread the glory of God. They who testify their faith by works, give us the better comfort, and posterity the better example. It will be but Christ's first question at the last day, *What hast thou done for me?* If we can answer that, he will ask, *What hast thou suffered for me?* and if we can answer that, he will ask at last, *Whom hast thou won to me, what soul hast thou added to my kingdom?* Our thoughts, our words, our doings, our sufferings, if they bring but ourselves to heaven, they are not witnesses; our example brings others; and that is the purpose, and the end of all we have said, John Baptist was a witness to us, we are so to you, be you so to one another.

SERMON CXX.

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S.

PHILIP. iii. 2.

Beware of the concision.

THIS is one of those places of Scripture, which afford an argument for that, which I find often occasion to say, that there are not so eloquent books in the world, as the Scriptures. For there is not only that *non refugit*, which Calvin speaketh of in this place, (*Non refugit in organis suis Spiritus Sanctus leporem et facetias*, the Holy Ghost in his instruments, in those whose tongues or pens he makes use of) doth not forbid, nor decline elegant and cheerful, and delightful expression; but as God gave his children a bread of manna, that tasted to every man like that that he liked best, so hath God given us Scriptures, in which the plain and simple man may hear God speaking to him in his own plain and familiar language, and men of larger capacity, and more curiosity, may hear God in that music that they love best, in a curious, in an harmonious style, unparalleled by any. For, that also Calvin

adds in that place, that there is no secular author, *Qui jucundis vocum allusionibus, et figuris magis abundat*, which doth more abound with persuasive figures of rhetoric, nor with musical cadences and allusions, and assimilations, and conformity, and correspondency of words to one another, than some of the secretaries of the Holy Ghost, some of the authors of some books of the Bible do. Of this rule, this text is an example. These Philippians, amongst whom St. Paul had planted the Gospel in all sincerity, and impermixt, had admitted certain new men, that preached traditional, and additional doctrines, the law with the Gospel, Moses with Christ, circumcision with baptism. To these new convertites, these new doctors inculcated often that charm, *You are the circumcision*, you are they whom God hath sealed to himself by the seal of circumcision; they whom God hath distinguished from all nations, by the mark of circumcision; they in whom God hath imprinted, (and that in so high a way, as by a Sacrament) an internal circumcision, in an external; and will you break this seal of circumcision? will you deface this mark of circumcision? will you depart from this Sacrament of circumcision? you are the circumcision. Now St. Paul meets with these men upon their haunt; and even in the sound of that word which they so often pressed; he says they press upon you circumcision, but beware of concision, of tearing the church of God, of schisms, and separations from the church of God, of aspersions and imputations upon the church of God, either by imaginary superfluities, or imaginary defectiveness, in that church: for, saith the apostle, *We are the circumcision*, we who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. If therefore they will set up another circumcision beyond this circumcision, if they will continue a significative, a relative, a preparative figure, after the substance, the body, Christ Jesus is manifested to us, a legal circumcision in the flesh, after the spiritual circumcision in the heart is established by the Gospel, their end is not circumcision, but concision: they pretend reformation, but they intend destruction, a tearing, a rending, a wounding in the body, and frame, and peace of the church, and by all means, and in all cases *Videte concisionem, Beware of concision.*

First then, we shall from these words consider, the lothness of God to lose us. For, first, he leaves us not without a law, he bids and he forbids, and then he does not surprise us with obsolete laws, he leaves not his laws without proclamations, he refreshes to our memories, and represents to us our duties, with such commonefactions as these in our text, *videte, cavete*, this and this I have commanded you, *videte*, see that ye do it, this and this will hinder you, *cavete*, beware ye do it not, beware of concision.

And this, thus derived, and digested into these three branches, first, God's lothness to lose us; and then his way of drawing us to him, by manifestation of his will in a law; and lastly his way of holding us with him, by making that law effectual upon us, by these his frequent commonefactions, *videte, cavete*, look to it, beware of it, this will be our first part. And then our second will be the thing itself that falls under this inhibition, and caution, which is concision, that is, a tearing, a rending, a shredding in pieces that which should be entire. In which second part, we shall also have, (as we had in the former) three branches; for, we shall consider, first, *concisionem corporis*, the shredding of the body of Christ into fragments, by unnecessary wrangling in doctrinal points; and then, *concisionem vestis*, the shredding of the garment of Christ into rags, by unnecessary wrangling in matter of discipline, and ceremonial points; and lastly, *concisionem spiritus*, (which will follow upon the former two) the concision of thine own spirit, and heart, and mind, and soul, and conscience, into perplexities, and into sandy, and incoherent doubts, and scruples, and jealousies, and suspicions of God's purpose upon thee, so as that thou shalt not be able to recollect thyself, nor re-consolidate thyself, upon any assurance, and peace with God, which is only to be had in Christ, and by his church. *Videte concisionem*, beware of tearing the body, the doctrine; beware of tearing the garment, the discipline; beware of tearing thine own spirit, and conscience, from her adhesion, her agglutination, her cleaving to God, in a holy tranquillity, and acquiescence in his promise, and mercy, in the merits of his Son, applied by the Holy Ghost, in the ministry of the church.

For our first consideration, of God's lothness to lose us, this is argument enough, That we are here now, now at the partici-

pation of that grace, which God always offers to all such congregations as these, gathered in his name. For, I pray God there stand any one amongst us here now, that hath not done something since yesterday, that made him unworthy of being here to-day; and who, if he had been left under the damp, and mist of yesterday's sin, without the light of new grace, would never have found way hither of himself. If God be weary of me, and would fain be rid of me, he needs not repent that he wrapped me up in the covenant, and derived me of Christian parents, (though he gave me a great help in that) nor repent that he bred me in a true church, (though he afforded me a great assistance in that) nor repent that he hath brought me hither now, to the participation of his ordinances, (though thereby also I have a great advantage) for, if God be weary of me, and would be rid of me, he may find enough in me now, and here, to let me perish. A present levity in me that speak, a present formality in you that hear, a present hypocrisy spread over us all, would justify God, if now, and here, he should forsake us. When our blessed Saviour says, *When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith upon earth*[1]*?* we need not limit that question so, if he come to a Westminster, to an exchange, to an army, to a court, shall he find faith there? but if he come to a church, if he come hither, shall he find faith here? If (as Christ speaks in another sense, that judgment should begin at his own house) the great and general judgment should begin now at this his house, and that the first that should be taken up in the clouds, to meet the Lord Jesus, should be we, that are met now in this his house, would we be glad of that acceleration, or would we thank him for that haste? Men of little faith, I fear we would not. There was a day, when the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also amongst them[2]; one Satan amongst many sons of God. Blessed Lord, is not our case far otherwise? do not we, (we, who, as we are but we, are all the sons of Satan) present ourselves before thee, and yet thou, Lord, art amongst us? Is not the spirit of slumber and weariness upon one, and the spirit of detraction, and mis-interpretation upon another; upon one the spirit of impenitence for former sins, and the spirit of recidivation into old, or of facility and openness to

[1] Luke xviii. 8. [2] Job i. 6.

admit temptations into new upon another? We, as we are but we, are all the sons of Satan, and thou Lord, the only Son of God, only amongst us. If thou Lord wert weary of me, and wouldest be rid of me, (may many a soul here say) Lord thou knowest, and I know many a midnight, when thou mightest have been rid of me, if thou hadst left me to myself then. But *vigilavit Dominus*, the Lord vouchsafed to watch over me, and *deliciæ ejus*, the delight of the Lord[3] was to be with me; and what is there in me, but his mercy? But then, what is there in his mercy, that that may not reach to all, as well as to me? The Lord is loth to lose any, the Lord would not the death of any; not of any sinner: much less if he do not see him, nor consider him so; the Lord would not lose him, though a sinner, much less make him a sinner, that he might be lost: *vult omnes*, the Lord would have all men come unto him, and be saved, which was our first consideration, and we have done with that, and our second is, the way by which he leads us to him, that he declares and manifests his will unto us, in a law, he bids, and he forbids.

The labourers in the vineyard took it ill at the steward's hand, and at his master's too, that those which came late to the labour, were made equal with them, who had borne the heat, and the burden of the day[4]. But if the steward, or the master had never meant, or actually never had given anything at all, to them that had borne the heat and the burden of the day, there had been much more cause of complaint, because there had passed a contract between them. So hath there passed a contract between God, and us, Believe, and thou shalt live, do this and thou shalt live. And in this especially hath God expressed his love to us, and his lothness to lose us, that he hath passed such a contract with us, and manifested to us a way, to come to him. We say, every day, in his own prayer, *Fiat voluntas tua*, *Thy will be done;* that is, done by us, as well as done upon us. But this petition presumes another; the *fiat* supposes a *patefiat voluntas*, if it must be done, it must be known. If man were put into this world, and under an obligation of doing the will of God, upon damnation, and had no means to know that will which he was bound to do, of all creatures he were the most miserable. That which

[3] Prov. viii. 31. [4] Matt. xx. 22.

we read, *Lord what is man that thou takest knowledge of him*[5]? the Vulgate edition, and the fathers following the Septuagint, read thus, *Quia innotuisti ei*, Lord what is man that he should have any knowledge of thee, that thou shouldest make thyself known to him? This is the height of the mercy of God, this innotescence, this manifestation of himself to us. Now what is this innotescence, this manifestation of God to us? It is, say our old expositors, the law. That is that, which is so often called the face of God, and the light of his countenance; for, *Facies Dei est, qua nobis innotescit*[6], That is God's face, by which God is known to us, and that is his law, the declaration of his will to me, and my way to him. When Christ reproaches those hard-hearted men, that had not fed him, when he was hungry, nor clothed him, when he was naked, and that they say, *Lord, when did we see thee naked, or see thee hungry*[7]? (inconsiderate men, or men loth to give, the penurious and narrow soul, shall not see an occasion of charity, when it is presented, which is a heavy blindness, and obcæcation, not to see occasions of doing good) yet those men do not say, *When did we see thee at all?* as though they had never seen him. The blindest man that is, hath the face of God so turned towards him, as that he may be seen by him; even the natural man hath so; for, therefore does the apostle make him inexcusable, if in the visible work, he do not see the invisible God[8]. But all sight of God, is by the benefit of a law; the natural man sees him by a law written in his heart, the Jew, by a law given by Moses, the Christian, in a clearer glass, for his law is the Gospel. But there is more mercy, that is, more manifestation in this text, than all this. For, besides the natural man's seeing God, in a law, in the faculties of his own nature, (which we consider to be the work of the whole Trinity, in that *Faciamus hominem, Let us make man in our own image*, let us shine out in him, so as that he may be a glass, in which he may see us, in himself) and besides the Jews seeing of God in the law written in the stone tables, (which we consider to be the work of the Father) and besides the Christians seeing of God, in the law written in blood, in which we consider especially the Son, there

[5] Psalm cxliv. 3.
[6] Augustine.
[7] Matt. xxv. 44.
[8] Rom. i. 12.

is in this text an operation, a manifestation of God, proper to the Holy Ghost, and wrought by his holy suggestions and inspirations, that God does not only speak to us, but call upon us; not only give us a law, but proclamations upon that law, that he refreshes to our memories, general duties, by such particular warnings, and excitations, and commonefactions, as in this text, *videte*, beware, which is the last branch of this part, though it be the first word of our text, *videte, beware.*

Nothing exalts God's goodness towards us more than this, that he multiplies the means of his mercy to us, so, as that no man can say, Once I remember I might have been saved, once God called unto me, once he opened me a door, a passage into heaven, but I neglected that, went not in then, and God never came more. No doubt, God hath come often to that door since, and knocked, and stayed at that door; and if I knew who it were that said this, I should not doubt to make that suspicious soul see, that God is at that door now. *God hath spoken once, and twice have I heard him*[9]; for the foundation of all, God hath spoken but once, in his Scriptures. Therefore doth St. Jude[10] call that *fidem semel traditam*, the faith once delivered to the saints; once, that is, at once; not at once so, all at one time, or in one man's age; the Scriptures were not delivered so; for, God spoke by the mouth of the prophets, that have been, since the world began; but, at once, that is, by one way, by writing, by Scriptures; so, as that after that was done, after God had declared his whole will, in the law, and the prophets, and the Gospel, there was no more to be added. God hath spoken once, in his Scriptures, and we have heard him twice, at home, in our own readings, and again and again here, in his ordinances. This is the height of God's goodness, that he gives us his law, and a comment upon that law, proclamations, declarations upon that law. For, without these subsequent helps, even the law itself might be mistaken; as you see it was, when Christ was put to rectify them, with his, *audiistis*, and *audiistis*, this you have heard, and this hath been told you, *Ego autem dico*, but this *I say*[11], *ab initio*, from the beginning it was not so, the foundations were not thus laid, and upon the foundations laid by God in the Scriptures, and

[9] Psalm lxii. 11. [10] Verse 3. [11] Matt. v.

not upon the super-edifications of men, in traditional additions, must we build. In storms and tempests at sea men come sometimes to cut down galleries, and tear up cabins, and cast them over-board to ease the ship, and sometimes to hew down the mast itself, though without that mast the ship can make no way; but no foul weather can make them tear out the keel of the ship, upon which the ship is built. In cases of necessity, the church may forbear her galleries, and cabinets, means of ease and conveniency; yea, and her mast too, means of her growth, and propagation, and enlarging of herself, and be content to hull it out, and consist in her present, or a worse state, during the storm. But to the keel of the ship, to the fundamental articles of religion, may no violence, in any case, be offered.

God multiplies his mercies to us, in his divers ways of speaking to us. *Cœli enarrant*, says David, *The heavens declare the glory of God*[18]; and not only by showing, but by saying; there is a language in the heavens; for it is *enarrant*, a verbal declaration; and, as it follows literally, *Day unto day uttereth speech*. This is the true harmony of the spheres, which every man may hear. Though he understand no tongue but his own, he may hear God in the motions of the same, in the seasons of the year, in the vicissitudes and revolutions of church, and state, in the voice of thunder, and lightnings, and other declarations of his power. This is God's English to thee, and his French, and his Latin, and Greek, and Hebrew to others. God once confounded languages; that conspiring men might not understand one another, but never so, as that all men might not understand him. When the Holy Ghost fell upon the apostles, they spoke so, as that all men understood them, in their own tongues. When the Holy Ghost fell upon the waters in the Creation, God spoke so, in his language of works, as that all men may understand them. For in this language, the language of works, the eye is the ear, seeing is hearing. How often does the Holy Ghost call upon us in the Scriptures, *Ecce, quia os Domini locutum*, *Behold, the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it?* He calls us to behold, (which is the office of the eye) and that that we are to behold, is the voice of God, belonging to the ear; seeing is hearing, in God's first lan-

[18] Psalm xix. 2.

guage, the language of works. But then God translates himself, in particular works; nationally, he speaks in particular judgments, or deliverances to one nation; and, domestically, he speaks that language to a particular family; and so personally too; he speaks to every particular soul. God will speak unto me, in that voice, and in that way, which I am most delighted with, and hearken most to. If I be covetous, God will tell me that heaven is a pearl, a treasure. If cheerful and affected with mirth, that heaven is all joy. If ambitious, and hungry of preferment, that it is all glory. If sociable, and conversable, that it is a communion of saints. God will make a fever speak to me, and tell me his mind, that there is no health but in him; God will make the disfavour, and frowns of him I depend upon, speak to me, and tell me his mind, that there is no safe dependence, no assurance but in him; God will make a storm at sea, or a fire by land, speak to me, and tell me his mind, that there is no perpetuity, no possession but in him; nay, God will make my sin speak to me, and tell me his mind; even my sin shall be a sermon, and a catechism to me; God shall suffer me to fall into some such sin, as that by some circumstances in the sin, or consequences from the sin, I shall be drawn to hearken unto him; and whether I hear *Hosannas*, acclamations, and commendations, or *Crucifiges*, exclamations and condemnations from the world, I shall still find the voice and tongue of God, though in the mouth of the devil, and his instruments. God is a declaratory God. The whole year is, to his saints, a continual Epiphany, one day of manifestation. In every minute that strikes upon the bell, is a syllable, nay a syllogism from God. And, and in my last bell, God shall speak too; that bell, when it tolls, shall tell me I am going, and when it rings out, shall tell you I am gone into the hands of that God, who is the God of the living and not of the dead, for, they die not that depart in him. Dives pressed Abraham to send a preacher from the dead, to his brethren[14]. This was to put God to a new language, when he had spoken sufficiently by Moses, and the prophets. And yet, even in this language, the tongue of the dead, hath God spoken too. St. Hierome says, that that prophet Jonas, who was sent to Nineveh, was the same

[14] Luke xvi. 27.

man, whom, being then a child, and dead in his mother's house, the widow of Zarepta's house, Elias the prophet raised to life again[14]; and so, God spoke to Nineveh in that language, in the tongue of the dead. But be that but problematical, wrapped up in a traditional, and historical faith, this is dogmatical, and irrefragable, that God hath spoken to the whole world in the tongue of the dead, in his Son Christ Jesus, the Lord of life, and yet the first born of the dead. God is loth to lose us, at worst, and therefore, did not, surely, reject us, before we were ill, (and that was our first) God hath drawn us to him, by manifesting his will, and our way in a law, and therefore, will not judge at last, by any thing never revealed to us, (and that was our second) God holds us to him by these remembrances, these common manifestations in our text, *videte, cavete*, and therefore let no man that does not hear God speaking to him, in this present voice, despair that he shall never hear him, but hearken still, and in one language or other, perchance a sickness, perchance a sin, he shall hear him, for these are several dialects in God's language, several instruments in God's concert; and this is our third consideration, and the end of this first part, the prohibition, the commonefaction, *videte, cavete;* and we pass to our second general part, and the three branches of that, that that falls under this prohibition, *Videte concisionem, Beware the concision.*

St. Paul embraces here, that elegancy of language familiar to the Holy Ghost; they pretend circumcision, they intend concision; there is a certain elegant and holy delicacy, a certain holy juvenility in St. Paul's choosing these words of this musical cadence and agnomination, circumcision, and concision; but then this delicacy, and juvenility presents matter of gravity and soundness. Language must wait upon matter, and words upon things. In this case, (which indeed makes it a strange case) the matter is the form; the matter, that is, the doctrine that we preach, is the form, that is, the soul, the essence; the language and words we preach in, is but the body, but the existence. Therefore, St. Paul, who would not allow legal figures, not typical figures, not sacramental figures, not circumcision itself, after the body, Christ Jesus, was once exhibited, does not certainly allow rhetorical

[14] 1 Kings xvii.

figures, nor poetical figures, in the preaching, or hearing of Christ preached, so, as that that should be the principal leader of hearer, or speaker. But this St. Paul authorizeth in his own practice, and the Holy Ghost in him, that in elegant language, he incorporates, and invests sound and important doctrine; for, though he choose words of musical sound, circumcision and concision, yet it is a matter of weighty consideration that he intends in this concision. St. Chrysostom and St. Hierome both agree in this interpretation, That whereas circumcision is an orderly, a useful, a medicinal, a beneficial pruning and pairing off, that which is superfluous, *Conciditur quod temere, et inutiliter decerpitur*, Concision is a hasty and a rash plucking up, or cutting down, and an unprofitable tearing, and rending into shreds and fragments, such, as the prophet speaks of, *The breaking of a potter's vessel that cannot be made up again*[15]. Concision, is at best, *solutio continui*, the severing of that, which should be kept entire. In the state, the aliening of the head from the body, or of the body from the head, is concision; and *videte*, it is a fearful thing to be guilty of that. In the church, (which church is not a monarchy, otherwise than as she is united in her head, Christ Jesus) to constitute a monarchy, an universal head of the church, to the disinherison, and to the tearing of the crowns of princes, who are heads of the churches in their dominions, this is concision; and *videte*, it is a fearful thing to be guilty of that, to advance a foreign prelate. In the family, where God hath made man and wife, one, to divide with others, is concision; and *videte*, it is a fearful thing to be guilty of that. Generally, the tearing of that in pieces, which God intended should be kept entire, is this concision, and falls under this commonefaction, which implies an increpation, *videte*, *beware*. But because thus, concision would receive a concision into infinite branches, we determined this consideration, at first, into these three; first, *concisio corporis*, the concision of the body, disunion in doctrinal things; and *concisio vestis*, the concision of the garment, disunion in ceremonial things; and then *concisio spiritus*, the concision of the spirit, disunion, irresolution, unsettledness, diffidence, and distrust in thine own mind and conscience.

[15] Jer. xix. 11.

First, for this concision of the body, of the body of divinity, in doctrinal things, since still concision is *solutio continui*, the breaking of that which should be entire, consider we first, what this *continuum*, this that should be kept entire, is; and it is, says the apostle, *Jesus himself. Omnis spiritus qui solvit Jesum*, (so the ancients read that place) *Every spirit which dissolveth Jesus*[16], that breaks Jesus in pieces, that makes religion serve turns, that admits so much Gospel as may promove and advance present businesses, every such spirit is not of God. Not to profess the whole Gospel, *totum Jesum*, not to believe all the articles of faith, this is *solutio continui*, a breaking of that which should be entire; and this is truly concision. Now with concision in this kind, our greatest adversaries, they of the Roman heresy, and mispersuasion, do not charge us. They do not charge us that we deny any article of any ancient creed: nor may they deny, that there is not enough for salvation in those ancient creeds. This is *continuitas universalis*, a continuity, an entireness that goes through the whole church; a skin that covers the whole body; the whole church is bound to believe all the articles of faith. But then, there is *Continuitas particularis*, *continuitas modi*, a continuity, a harmony, an entireness, that does not go through the whole church; the whole church does not always agree in the manner of explication of all the articles of faith; but this may be a skin that covers some particular limb of the body, and not another; one church may expound an article thus, and some other some other way, as, in particular, the Lutheran church expounds the article of Christ's descent into hell, one way, and the Calvinist another. Now, in cases, where neither exposition destroys the article, in the substance thereof, it is concision, that is, *solutio continui*, a breaking of that which should be kept entire, for any man to break the peace of that church, in which he hath received his baptism, and hath his station, by advancing the exposition of any other church, in that. And as this is concision, *solutio continui*, a breaking of that which is entire, to break the peace of the church, where we were baptized, by teaching otherwise than that church teaches, in these things *de modo*, of the manner of expounding such or such articles of faith, so is there another

[16] 1 John iv. 3.

dangerous concision too. For, to inoculate a foreign bud, or to engraff a foreign bough, is concision, as well as the cutting off an arm from the tree; to inoculate, cleaves the rind, the bark; and to engraff, cleaves the tree: it severs that which should be entire. So, when a particular church, in a holy, and discreet modesty, hath abstained from declaring herself in the exposition of some particular articles, or of some doctrines, by fair consequence deducible from those articles, and contented herself with those general things which are necessary to salvation, (as the church of England hath, in the article of Christ's descent into hell) it is concision, it is *solutio continui*, a breaking of that which should be entire, to inoculate a new sense, or engraff a new exposition, which howsoever it may be true in itself, it cannot be truly said, to be the sense of that church; not perchance because that church was not of that mind, but because that church finding the thing itself to be no fundamental thing, thought it unnecessary to descend to particular declarations, when as in such declarations she must have departed from some other church of the Reformation, that thought otherwise, and in keeping herself within those general terms that were necessary, and sufficient, with a good conscience she conserved peace and unity with all. David, in the person of every member of the church, submits himself to that increpation, *Let my right hand forget her cunning, and let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem before my chiefest joy*[17]. Our chiefest joy, is, for the most part, our own opinions, especially when they concur with other learned and good men too. But then, Jerusalem is our love of the peace of the church; and in such things as do not violate foundations, let us prefer Jerusalem before our chiefest joy, love of peace before our own opinions, though concurrent with others. For, this is that, that hath misled many men, that the common opinion in the church is necessarily the opinion of the church. It is not so; not so in the Roman church: there the common opinion is, that the blessed Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin: but cannot be said to be the opinion of that church; nor may it be safely concluded in any church: most writers in the church have declared themselves this way, therefore the church hath declared herself,

[17] Psalm cxxxvii. 6.

for the declarations of the church are done publicly, and orderly, and at once. And when a church hath declared herself so, in all things necessary and sufficient, let us possess our souls in peace, and not say that that church hath, or press that that church would proceed to further declarations in less necessary particulars. When we are sure we have believed and practised, all that the church hath recommended to us, in these generals, then, and not till then, let us call for more declarations; but in the meantime prefer Jerusalem before our chiefest joy, love of peace by a general forbearance on all sides, rather than victory by wrangling, and uncharitableness. And let our right hand forget her cunning, (let us never set pen to paper to write) let our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth, (let us never open our mouth to speak of those things) in which silence was an act of discretion, and charity before, but now is also an act of obedience, and of allegiance and loyalty. But that which David said to the Lord[18], Let us also accommodate to the Lord's anointed, *Tibi laus silentium*, our best sacrifice to both, is to be silent in those things. So then, this is *concisio corporis*, that concision of the body, which you are to beware in doctrinal things, first, *non solvere Jesum*, not to dissolve, not to break Jesus in pieces, not to depart, in any respect, with any fundamental article of faith, for that is a skin that covers the whole body, an obligation that lies upon the whole church; and then for that particular church, in which you have your station, first, to conform yourself to all that, in which she had evidently declared herself, and then not to impute to her, not to call such articles hers, as she never avowed. And our next consideration is, *Concisio vestis, the tearing of the garment*, matter of discipline, and government.

To a circumcision of the garment, that is, to a paring, and taking away such ceremonies, as were superstitious, or superfluous, of an ill use, or of no use, our church came in the beginning of the Reformation. To a circumcision we came; but those churches that came to a concision of the garment, to an absolute taking away of all ceremonies, neither provided so safely for the church itself in the substance thereof, nor for the exaltation of

[18] Psalm LXV. 1.

devotion in the church. Divide the law of the Jews into two halves, and the ceremonial will be the greater; we cannot call the moral law, the Jew's law; that was ours as well as theirs, peculiar to none; but of that law which is peculiar to the Jews, judicial and ceremonial, the ceremonial is far the greater part. So great a care had God, of those things, which though they be not of the revenue of religion, yet are of the subsidy of religion, and, though they be not the soul of the church, yet are they those spirits that unite soul and body together. Hanun did but shave the beards of David's servants, he did not cut off their heads; he did not cut their clothes so, as that he stripped them naked[19]. Yet, for that that he did, (says that story) *he stank in David's sight*, (which is a phrase of high indignation in that language) and so much, as that it cost him forty thousand of his horsemen in one battle. And therefore as this apostle enters this *caveat* in another place, *If ye bite one another, cavete, take heed ye be not consumed of one another*[20], so *cavete*, take heed of this concision of the garment, lest if the garment be torn off, the body wither, and perish. A shadow is nothing, yet, if the rising or falling sun shine out, and there be no shadow, I will pronounce there is no body in that place neither. Ceremonies are nothing; but where there are no ceremonies, order, and uniformity, and obedience, and at last, (and quickly) religion itself will vanish. And therefore *videte concisionem*, beware of tearing the body, or of tearing the garment, which will induce the other, and both will induce the third, *concisionem spiritus*, the tearing of thine own spirit, from that rest which it should receive in God; for, when thou hast lost thy hold of all those handles which God reaches out to thee, in the ministry of his church, and that thou hast no means to apply the promises of God in Christ to thy soul, which are only applied by God's ordinances in his church, when anything falls upon thee, that overcomes thy moral constancy (which moral constancy, God knows, is soon spent, if we have lost our recourse to God) thou wilt soon sink into an irrecoverable desperation, which is the fearfullest concision of all; and *videte*, beware of this concision.

[19] 2 Sam. x. [20] Gal. v. 15.

When God hath made himself one body with me, by his assuming this nature, and made me one spirit with himself[21], and that by so high a way, as making me partaker of the divine nature[22], so that now, in Christ Jesus, he and I are one, this were *solutio Jesu*, a tearing in pieces, a dissolving of Jesus, in the worst kind that could be imagined, if I should tear myself from Jesus, or by any jealousy or suspicion of his mercy, or any horror in my own sins, come to think myself to be none of his, none of him. Who ever comes into a church to denounce an excommunication against himself? And shall any sad soul come hither, to gather arguments, from our preaching, to excommunicate itself, or to pronounce an impossibility upon her own salvation? God did a new thing, says Moses[23], a strange thing, a thing never done before, when the earth opened her mouth, and Dathan, and Abiram went down quick into the pit. Wilt thou do a stranger thing than that? To tear open the jaws of earth, and hell, and cast thyself actually and really into it, out of a mis-imagination, that God hath cast thee into it before? Wilt thou force God to second thy irreligious melancholy, and to condemn thee at last, because thou hadst precondemned thyself, and renounced his mercy? Wilt thou say with Cain, *My sin is greater than can be pardoned?* This is *concisio potestatis*, a cutting off the power of God, and treason against the Father, whose attribute is power. Wilt thou say, God never meant to save me? this is *concisio sapientiæ*, a cutting off the wisdom of God, to think, that God intended himself glory in a kingdom, and would not have that kingdom peopled, and this is treason against the Son, whose attribute is wisdom? Wilt thou say, I shall never find comfort in praying, in preaching, in receiving? This is *concisio consolationis*, the cutting off consolation, and treason against the Holy Ghost, whose office is comfort. No man violates the power of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, the goodness of the Holy Ghost, so much as he, who thinks himself out of their reach, or the latitude of their working. Rachel wept for her children, and would not be comforted; but why? *Because they were not*[24]. If her children had been but gone for a

[21] 1 Cor. vi. 17.
[22] 2 Peter i. 4.
[23] Numb. xvi. 30.
[24] Matt. ii. 18.

time from her, or but sick with her, Rachel would have been comforted; but, they were not. Is that thy case? Is not thy soul, a soul still? It may have gone from thee, in sins of inconsideration; it may be sick within thee, in sins of habit and custom; but is not thy soul, a soul still? And hath God made any species larger than himself? is there more soul, than there is God, more sin than mercy? Truly Origen was more excusable, more pardonable, if he did believe, that the devil might possibly be saved, than that man, that believes that himself must necessarily be damned. And therefore, *videte concisionem*, beware of cutting off thy spirit from this spirit of comfort; take heed of shredding God's general promises, into so narrow propositions, as that they will not reach home to thee, cover thee, invest thee; beware of such distinctions, and such sub-divisions, as may make the way to heaven too narrow for thee, or the gate of heaven too straight for thee. It is true, one drop of my Saviour's blood would save me, if I had but that; one tear from my Saviour's eye, if I had but that; but he hath none that hath not all; a drop, a tear, would wash away an adultery, a murder, but less than the whole sea of both, will not wash away a wanton look, an angry word. God would have all, and gives all to all. And for God's sake, let God be as good as he will; as merciful, and as large, as liberal, and as general as he will. Christ came to save sinners; thou art sure thou art one of them; at what time soever a sinner repents, he shall be heard; be sure to be one of them too. Believe that God in Christ proposes conditions to thee; endeavour the performing, repent the not performing of those conditions, and be that the issue between God and thy soul; and lest thou end in this concision, the concision of the Spirit, beware of the other two concisions, of the body, and of the garment, by which only, all heavenly succours are appliable to thee.

SERMON CXXI.

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 20.

We pray ye in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God.

IN bestowing of benefits, there are some circumstances, that vitiate and deprave the nature of the benefit, as when a man gives only in contemplation of retribution, for then he is not *dator*, but *mercator*, this is not a giving, but a merchandising, a permutation, or when he is *cyminibilis dator*, (as our canons speak) one that gives mint and cumin, so small things, and in so small proportions, as only keeps him alive that receives, and so *Ipsum quod dat, perit, et vitam producit ad miseriam*, that that is given is lost, and he that receives it, is but continued in misery, and so the benefit, hath almost the nature of an injury, because but for that poor benefit, he might have got out of this life. And then there are circumstances, that do absolutely annihilate a benefit, amongst which, one is, if the giver take so express, so direct, so public knowledge of the wants of the receiver, as that he shall be more ashamed by it, than refreshed with it; for in many courses of life, it does more deject a man, in his own heart, and in the opinion of others too, and more retard him in any preferment, to be known to be poor, than to be so indeed; and he that gives so, does not only make him that receives, his debtor, but his prisoner, for he takes away his liberty of applying himself to others, who might be more beneficial to him, than he that captivated, and ensnared him, with that small benefit. And therefore many times in the Scripture, the phrase is such in doing a courtesy, as though the receiver had done it, in accepting it; so when Jacob made a present to his brother Esau, *I beseech thee*, says he, *to take my blessing* that *I may find favour in thy sight*[1]; so he compelled him to take it. So when Christ recommends here to his people, the great, and inestimable benefit in our text, reconciliation to God, he delivers that benefit of all

[1] Gen. xxxiii. 10.

those accidents, or circumstances, that might vitiate it; and amongst those, of this, that we should not be confounded with the notice taken of our poverty, and indigence; for he proceeds with man, as though man might be of some use to him, and with whom it were fit for him to hold good correspondence, he sends to him by ambassadors, (as it is in the words immediately before the text) and by those ambassadors he prays him, that he would accept the benefit of reconciliation. To us, who are his creatures, and therefore might be turned and wound by his general providence, without employment of any particular messengers, he sends particular messengers; to us that are his enemies, and fitter to receive denunciations of a war, by a herald, than a message by ambassadors, he sends ambassadors; to us, who are indeed rebels, and not enemies, and therefore rather to be reduced and reclaimed by executioners, than by commissioners, he sends commissioners, not to article, not to capitulate, but to pray, and to entreat, and not to entreat us to accept God's reconciliation to us, but, as though God needed us, to entreat us to be reconciled to him; *We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

In these words, our parts will be three: our office towards you; yours towards us; and the negotiation itself, reconciliation to God. In each of these three, there is a rederivation into three branches: for, in the two first (besides the matter) there are two kinds of persons, we and you, the priest and the people (we pray you). And in the last there are two kinds of persons too, you and God; *Be ye reconciled to God.* But because all these kinds of persons, God, and we, and you, fall frequently into our consideration, there is the less necessity laid upon us to handle them, as distinct branches, otherwise than as they fall into the negotiation itself. Therefore we shall determine ourselves in these three: first, our office towards you, and our stipulation and contract with you, we pray you; we come not as lords or commanders over you, but in humble, in submissive manner, we pray you. And then your respect to us, because in what manner soever we come, we come in Christ's stead, and though dimly, yet represent him. And lastly, the blessed effect of this our humility to you, and this your respect to us, reconciliation to

God. Humility in us, because we are sent to the poorest soul; respect in you, because we are sent to represent the highest king, work in you this reconciliation to God, and it is a text well handled; practice makes any sermon a good sermon.

First, then, for our office towards you, because you may be apt to say, *You take too much upon you, you sons of Levi;* we the sons of Levi, open unto you our commission, and we pursue but that we profess, that we are sent but to pray, but to entreat you; and we accompany it with an outward declaration, we stand bare, and you sit covered. When greater power seems to be given us, of treading upon dragons and scorpions, of binding and loosing, of casting out devils, and the like, we confess these are powers over sins, over devils that do, or endeavour to possess you, not over you, for to you we are sent to pray and entreat you. Though God sent Jeremy with that large commission, *Behold this day, I have set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to pluck up, and to root out, to destroy and to throw down*[1]; and though many of the prophets had their commissions drawn by that precedent, we claim not that, we distinguish between the extraordinary commission of the prophet, and the ordinary commission of the priest, we admit a great difference between them, and are far from taking upon us, all that the prophet might have done; which is an error, of which the church of Rome, and some other over-zealous congregations have been equally guilty, and equally opposed monarchy and sovereignty, by assuming to themselves, in an ordinary power, whatsoever God, upon extraordinary occasions, was pleased to give for the present, to his extraordinary instruments the prophets; our commission is to pray, and to entreat you. Though upon those words, *Ascendunt Salvatores in Montem Sion*[2], There shall arise Saviours in Mount Sion, in the church of God, St. Hierome saith, That as Christ being the light of the world, called his apostles the light of the world too; so, *Ipse Salvator apostolos voluit esse Salvatores*, The Saviour of the world communicates to us the name of Saviours of the world too, yet howsoever instrumentally and ministerially that glorious name of Saviour may be afforded to us, though to a high hill, though to that Mount Sion, we are led by a low way, by the

[1] Jer. i. 10. [2] Obad. 21.

example of our blessed Saviour himself; and since there was an *oportuit pati*, laid upon him, there may well be an *oportet obsecrare* laid upon us; since his way was to be dumb, ours may well be to utter no other voice but prayers; since he bled, we may well sweat in his service, for the salvation of your souls. If therefore ourselves, who are sent, be under contempt, or under persecution, if the sword of the tongue, or the sword of the tyrant be drawn against us, against all these, *arma nostra, preces et fletus*[4], we defend with no other shield, we return with no other sword, but tears and prayers, and blessing of them that curse us. Yea, if he that sent us suffer in us, if we see you denounce a war against him, nay, triumph over him, and provoke him to anger, and because he shows no anger, conclude out of his patience, an impotency, that because he doth not, he cannot, when you scourge him, and scoff him, and spit in his face, and crucify him, and practice every day all the Jews did to him once, as though that were your pattern, and your business were to exceed your pattern, and crucify your Saviour worse than they did, by tearing and mangling his body, now glorified, by your blasphemous oaths, and execrable imprecations, when we see all this, *arma nostra preces et fletus*, we can defend ourselves, nor him, no other way, we present to you our tears, and our prayers, his tears, and his prayers that sent us, and if you will not be reduced with these, our commission is at an end. I bring not a star-chamber with me up into the pulpit, to punish a forgery, if you counterfeit a zeal in coming hither now; nor an exchequer, to punish usurious contracts, though made in the church; nor a high commission, to punish incontinences, if they be promoted by wanton interchange of looks, in this place. Only by my prayers, which he hath promised to accompany and prosper in his service, I can diffuse his overshadowing Spirit over all the corners of this congregation, and pray that publican, that stands below afar off, and dares not lift up his eyes to heaven, to receive a cheerful confidence, that his sins are forgiven him; and pray that Pharisee, that stands above, and only thanks God, that he is not like other men, to believe himself to be, if not a rebellious, yet an unprofitable servant. I can only tell them, that neither of them is in the

[4] Ambrose.

right way of reconciliation to God, *Nec qui impugnant gratiam, nec qui superbe gratias agunt*[5], neither he who by a diffidence hinders the working of God's grace, nor he that thanks God in such a fashion, as though all that he had received, were not of mere mercy, but between a debt and a benefit, and that he had either merited before, or paid God after, in pious works, for all, and for more than he hath received at God's hand.

Scarce anywhere hath the Holy Ghost taken a word of larger signification, than here; for, as though it were hard, even to him, to express the humility which we are to use, rather than lose any soul for which Christ hath dyed, he hath taught us this obsecration, this praying, this entreating in our text, in a word, by which the Septuagint, the first translators into Greek, express divers affections, and all within the compass of this *obsecramus*, we pray you. Some of them we shall present to you.

Those translators use that word for *napal*. *Napal* is *ruere, postrare*, to throw down, to deject ourselves, to admit any undervalue, any exinanition, any evacuation of ourselves, so we may advance this great work. *I fell down before the Lord*, says Moses of himself; and Abraham fell upon his face, says Moses of him, and in no sense is this word oftener used, by them, than in this humiliation. But yet, as it signifies to need the favour of another, so does it also to be favourable, and merciful to another; for so also, the same translators use this word for *chanan*, which is to oblige and bind a man by benefits, or to have compassion upon him; *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*[6]; there is our word repeated. So that, whether we profess to you, that as physicians must consider excrements, so we must consider sin, the leprosy, the pestilence, the ordure of the soul, there is our dejection of ourselves, or make you see your poverty and indigence, and that that can be no way supplied, but by those means, which God conveys by us, both ways we are within our word, *obsecramus*, we pray you, we entreat you.

They use this word also for *calah*, and *calah* is *dolere*, to grieve within ourselves, for the affliction of another; but it signifies also *vulnerare*, to wound, and afflict another; for so it is said in this

[5] Augustine. [6] Job xix. 21.

word, *Saul was sore wounded*[7]. So that, whether we express our grief, in the behalf of Christ, that you will not be reconciled to God, or whether we wound your consciences, with a sense of your sins, and his judgments, we are still within the word of our commission, *obsecramus*, we pray, we entreat.

To contract this consideration, they use this word for *cruciare*, to vex, and for *placare* too, to appease, to restore to rest and quiet. *Therefore will I make thee sick in smiting thee*[8]; there it is vexation; and then, *They sent unto the house of the Lord, Placare Dominum*[9], to appease the Lord, as we translate it, and well, to pray. And therefore, if from our words proceed any vexation to your consciences, you must not say, *Transeat calix*, Let that cup pass, no more of that matter, for it is the physic that must first stir the humour, before it can purge it; and if our words apply to your consciences, the sovereign balm of the merits of your Saviour, and that thereupon your troubled consciences find some rest, be not too soon secure, but proceed in your good beginnings, and continue in hearing, as we shall continue in all these manners of praying and entreating, which fall into the word of our text, *obsecramus*, by being beholden to you for your application, or making you beholden to us, for our ministration, which was the first use of the word, of grieving for you, or grieving you for your sins, which was the second, of troubling your consciences, and then of settling them again, in a calm reposedness, which was the third signification of the word in their translation.

Yet does the Holy Ghost carry our office, (I speak of the manner of the execution of our office, for, for the office itself, nothing can be more glorious, than the ministration of the Gospel), into lower terms than these. He suffered his apostles to be thought to be drunk[10]; they were full of the Holy Ghost, and they were thought full of new wine. A drachm of zeal more than ordinary, against a patron, or against a great parishioner, makes us presently scandalous ministers. Truly, beloved, we confess, one sign of drunkenness is, not to remember what we said. If we do not in our practice, remember what we preached, and live as we teach, we are dead all the week, and we are drunk upon

[7] 1 Sam. xxxi. 3. [8] Micah vi. 3.
[9] Zech. vii. 12. [10] Acts ii. 15.

the Sunday. But Hannah prayed, and was thought drunk, and this grieved her heart[11]; so must it us, when you ascribe our zeal for the glory of God, and the good of your souls, to any inordinate passion, or sinister purpose in us.

And yet hath the Holy Ghost laid us lower than this. To be drunk is an alienation of the mind, but it is but a short one; but St. Paul was under the imputation of madness. Nay, our blessed Saviour himself did some such act of vehement zeal, as that his very friends thought him mad[12]. St. Paul, because his madness was imputed to a false cause, to a pride in his much learning, disavowed his madness, *I am not mad, O noble Festus.* But when the cause was justifiable, he thought his madness justifiable too; *If we be beside ourselves, it is for God*[13]; and so long well enough. *Insaniebat amatoriam insaniam Paulus*[14], St. Paul was mad for love; St. Paul did, and we do take into our contemplation, the beauty of a Christian soul; through the ragged apparel of the afflictions of this life; through the scars, and wounds, and paleness, and morphews of sin, and corruption, we can look upon the soul itself, and there see that incorruptible beauty, that white and red, which the innocency and the blood of Christ hath given it, and we are mad for love of this soul, and ready to do any act of danger, in the ways of persecution, any act of diminution of ourselves in the ways of humiliation, to stand at her door, and pray, and beg, that she would be reconciled to God.

And yet does the Holy Ghost lay us lower than this too. Madmen have some flashes, some twilights, some returns of sense and reason, but the fool hath none; and, *we are fools for Christ*, says the apostle[15]; and not only we, the persons, but the ministration itself, the function itself is foolishness; it *pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.* Anger will bear an action, and *racah* will bear an action, but to say fool, was the heaviest imputation; and we are fools for Christ, and pretend nothing to work by, but the foolishness of preaching. Lower than this, we cannot be cast, and higher than this we offer not to climb; *obsecramus*, we have no other commission but to pray,

[11] 1 Sam. i. xv. [12] Mark iii. 21. [13] 2 Cor. v. 13.
[14] Theophilus. [15] 1 Cor. iv. x.

and to entreat, and that we do, in his words, in his tears, in his blood, and in his bowels who sent us, *we pray you in Christ's stead*, which is that that constitutes our second part, with what respect you should receive us.

In mittendariis servanda dignitas mittentis. To diminish the honour of his master, is not an humility, but a prevarication in any ambassador; and that is our quality, expressed in this verse. God is the Lord of Hosts, and he is the Prince of Peace; he needs neither the armies of princes, nor the wisdom of council tables, to come to his ends. He is the proprietary and owner of all the treasures in the world; *Ye have taken my silver and my gold*[16]; and, *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine*[17]. All that you call yours, all that you can call yours, is his; yourselves are but the furniture of his house, and your great hearts are but little boxes in his cabinet, and he can fill them with dejection, and sadness, when he will. And does any prince govern at home, by an ambassador? He sends pursuivants, and serjeants; he sends not ambassadors; God does, and we are they; and we look to be received by you, but as we perform those two laws which bind ambassadors, first, *Rei suæ ne quis legatus esto*, Let no man be received as an ambassador, that hath that title, only to negotiate for himself, and do his own business in that country; and then, *Nemini credatur sine principali mandato*, Let no man be received for an ambassador, without his letters of credence, and his master's commission. To these two we submit ourselves.

First, we are not *Rei nostræ legati*, we come not to do our own business; what business of ours is it, what is it to us, that you be reconciled to God? *Væ mihi si non*, *Necessity is laid upon me, and woe unto me, if I preach not the Gospel*[18]; but if I do, I have nothing to glory in; nay, I may be a reprobate myself. I can claim no more at God's hand, for this service, than the sun can, for shining upon the earth, or the earth for producing flowers, and fruits; and therefore we are not *Rei nostræ legati*, Ambassadors in our own behalfs, and to do our own business.

Indeed where men are sent out, to vent and utter the ware and merchandises of the church and court of Rome, to proclaim,

[16] Joel iii. 5. [17] Hag. ii. 8. [18] 1 Cor. ix. 16.

and advance the value, and efficacy of uncertain relics, and superstitious charms, and incantations, when they are sent to sell particular sins at a certain price, and to take so much for an incest, so much for a murder, when they are sent with many sums of indulgences at once, as they are now to the Indies, and were heretofore to us, when these indulgences are accompanied with this doctrine, that if the indulgence require a certain piece of money to be given for it, (as for the most part they do) if all the spiritual parts of the indulgence be performed by the poor sinner, yet if he give not that money, though he be not worth that money, though that merchant of those indulgences, do out of his charity give him one of those indulgences, yet all this doth that man no good, in these cases, they are indeed *rei suæ legati*, ambassadors to serve their own turns, and do their own business. When that bishop sends out his *legatos à latere*, ambassadors from his own chair and bosom into foreign nations, to exhaust their treasures, to alien their subjects, to infect their religion; these are *rei suæ legati*, ambassadors that have businesses depending in those places, and therefore come upon their own errand. Nor can that church excuse itself, (though it use to do so) upon the misbehaviour of those officers, when they are employed; for they are employed to that purpose: and, *Tibi imputa quicquid pateris ab eo, qui sine te, nihil potest facere*[19]: Since he might mend the fault, it is his fault, that it is done; he cannot excuse himself, if they be guilty, and with his privity: for, as the same devout man saith, to Eugenius, then pope, *Ne te dixeris sanum dolentem latera;* If thy sides ache, (if thy legates *à latere*, be corrupt) call not thyself well, *Nec bonum malis innitentem*, nor call thyself good, if thou rely upon the counsel of those that are ill; they, those legates *à latere*, are, (as they use to express it) incorporated in the pope, and therefore they are *rei sui legati*, ambassadors that lie to do their own business. But when we seek to raise no other war in you, but to arm the spirit against the flesh, when we present to you no other holy water, but the tears of Christ Jesus, no other relics, but the commemoration of his passion in the sacrament, no other indulgences, and acquittances, but the application of his merits to your souls, when we offer all this without silver, and without

[19] Bernard.

gold, when we offer you that seal which he hath committed to us, in absolution, without extortion or fees, wherein are we *rei nostræ legati*, ambassadors in our own behalfs, or advancers of our own ends?

And as we are not so, so neither are we in the second danger, to come *sine principali mandato*, without commission from our Master. Christ himself would not come of himself, but acknowledged and testified his mission, *The Father which sent me, he gave me commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak*[20]. Those whom he employed produced their commissions, *Neither received I it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*[21]. How should *they preach except they be sent?* is a question which St. Paul intended for a conclusive question, that none could answer, till in the Roman church they excepted cardinals, *Quibus sine literis creditur, propter personarum solennitatem*, who for the dignity inherent in their persons, must be received, though they have no commission.

When our adversaries do so violently, so impetuously cry out, that we have no church, no sacrament, no priesthood, because none are sent, that is, none have a right calling, for internal calling, who are called by the Spirit of God, they can be no judges, and for external calling, we admit them for judges, and are content to be tried by their own canons, and their own evidences, for our mission and vocation, or sending and our calling to the ministry. If they require a necessity of lawful ministers to the constitution of a church, we require it with as much earnestness as they; *Ecclesia non est quæ non habet sacerdotem*, we profess with St. Hierome, It is no church that hath no priest. If they require, that this spiritual power be received from them, who have the same power in themselves, we profess it too, *Nemo dat quod non habet*, No man can confer other power upon another, than he hath himself. If they require imposition of hands, in conferring orders, we join hands with them. If they will have it a sacrament; men may be content to let us be as liberal of that name of sacrament, as Calvin is; and he says of it[22], *Non invitus patior vocari sacramentum, ita inter ordinaria sacramenta non*

[20] John xii. 49. [21] Gal. i. 12. [22] Institut. l. iv. c. 14. § 20.

numero, I am not loth, it should be called a sacrament, so it be not made an ordinary, that is, a general sacrament; and how ill hath this been taken at some of our men's hands, to speak of more such sacraments, when indeed they have learnt this manner of speech, and difference of sacraments, not only from the ancient fathers, but from Calvin himself, who always spoke with a holy wariness, and discretion. Whatsoever their own authors, their own schools, their own canons do require to be essentially and necessarily requisite in this mission in this function, we, for our parts, and as much as concerns our church of England, admit it too, and profess to have it. And whatsoever they can say for their church, that from their first conversion, they have had an orderly derivation of power from one to another, we can as justly and truly say of our church, that ever since her first being of such a church, to this day, she hath conserved the same order, and ever hath had, and hath now, those ambassadors sent, with the same commission, and by the same means, that they pretend to have in their church. And being herein convinced, by the evidence of undeniable record, which have been therefore showed to some of their priests, not being able to deny that such a succession and ordination, we have had, from the hands of such as were made bishops according to their canons, now they pursue their common beaten way, that as in our doctrine, they confess we affirm no heresy, but that we deny some truths, so in our ordination, and sending, and calling, when they cannot deny, but that from such a person, who is, by their own canons, able to confer orders, we, in taking our orders, (after their own manner) receive the Holy Ghost, and the power of binding and loosing, yet, say they, we receive not the full power of priests, for, we receive only a power *in corpus mysticum*, upon the mystical body of Christ, that is, the persons that constitute the visible church, but we should receive it *in corpus verum*, a power upon the very natural body, a power of consecration, by way of transubstantiation. They may be pleased to pardon, this, rather modesty, than defect, in us, who, so we may work fruitfully, and effectually upon the mystical body of Christ, can be content that his real, and true body work upon us. Not that we have no interest to work upon the real body of Christ, since he hath made us dispensers even of that, to the

faithful, in the sacrament; but for such a power, as exceeds the Holy Ghost, who in the incarnation of Christ, when he overshadowed the blessed Virgin, did but make man of the woman, who was one part disposed by nature thereunto, whereas these men make man, and God too of bread, naturally wholly indisposed to any such change, for this power we confess it is not in our commission; and their commission, and ours was all one; and the commission is manifest in the Gospel; and, since they can charge us with no erasures, no expunctions, we must charge them with interlinings, and additions, to the first commission. But for that power, which is to work upon you, to whom we are sent, we are defective in nothing, which they call necessary thereunto.

This I speak of this church, in which God hath planted us, that God hath afforded us all that might serve, even for the stopping of the adversary's mouth, and to confound them in their own way: which I speak, only to excite us to a thankfulness to God, for his abundant grace in affording us so much, and not to disparage, or draw in question any other of our neighbour churches, who, perchance, cannot derive, as we can, their power, and their mission, by the ways required, and practised in the Roman church, nor have had from the beginning a continuance of consecration by bishops, and such other concurrences, as those canons require, and as our church hath enjoined. They, no doubt, can justly plead for themselves, that ecclesiastical positive laws admit dispensation in cases of necessity; they may justly challenge a dispensation, but we need none; they did what was lawful in a case of necessity, but Almighty God preserved us from this necessity. As men therefore, *Qui nec jussi renuunt, nec non jussi affectant*[23], which neither neglect God's calling, when we have it, nor counterfeit it, when we have it not, *Qui quod verecunde excusant, obstinatius non recusant*, who though we confess ourselves altogether unworthy, have yet the seals of God, and his church upon us, *nec rei nostræ legati*, not to promove our own ends, but your reconciliation to God, *nec sine principali mandato*, not without a direct and published commission, in the Gospel, we come to you in Christ's stead, and so should be received by you. As for our mission, that being in the quality of ambassa-

[23] Bernard.

dors, we submitted ourselves to those two obligations, which we noted to lie upon ambassadors, so here in our reception, we shall propose to you two things, that are, for the most part, practised by princes, in the reception of ambassadors. One is, that before they give audience, they endeavour, by some confident servant of theirs, to discern and understand the inclination of the ambassador, and the general scope, and purpose of his negotiation, and of the behaviour that he purposeth to use in delivering his message; lest for want of thus much light, the prince might either be unprepared in what manner to express himself, or be surprised with some such message, as might not well comport with his honour to hear. But in these ambassages from God to man, no man is so equal to God, as that he may refuse to give audience, except he know beforehand that the message be agreeable to his mind. Only he that will be more than man, that man of sin, who esteemeth himself to be joined in commission with God, only he hath a particular officer to know beforehand, what message God's ambassadors bringeth, and to peruse all sermons to be preached before him, and to expunge, correct, alter, all such things as may be disagreeable to him. It cannot therefore become you to come to these audiences upon conditions; to inform yourselves from others first, what kind of messages, such or such an ambassador useth to deliver; whether he preach mercy or judgment; that if he preach against usury, you will hear court-sermons, where there is less occasion to mention it; If he preach against incontinency, you will go; whither? Is there any place that doth not extort from us, reprehensions, exclamations against that sin? But if you believe us to come in Christ's stead, whatever our message be, you must hear us.

Do that, and for the second thing that princes practise in the reception of ambassadors, which is, to refer ambassadors to their council, we are well content to admit from you. Whosever is of your nearest counsel, and whose opinion you best trust in, we are content to submit it to. Let natural reason, let affections, let the profits or the pleasures of the world be the council-table, and can they tell you, that you are able to maintain a war against God, and subsist so, without being reconciled to him? Deceive not

yourselves, no man hath so much pleasure in this life, as he that is at peace with God.

What an organ hath that man tuned, how hath he brought all things in the world to a concert, and what a blessed anthem doth he sing to that organ, that is at peace with God! His rye-bread is manna, and his beef is quails, his day-labours are thrustings at the narrow gate into heaven, and his night-watchings are ecstasies and evocations of his soul into the presence and communion of saints, his sweat is pearls, and his blood is rubies, it is at peace with God. No man that is at suit in himself, no man that carrieth a Westminster in his bosom, and is plaintiff and defendant too, no man that serveth himself with process out of his own conscience, for every night's pleasure that he taketh, in the morning, and for every day's pound that he getteth, in the evening, hath any of the pleasure, or profit, that may be had in this life; nor any that is not at peace with God. That peace we bring you; how will you receive us?

That vehemence of zeal which the apostle found, we hope not for; *You received me* as an angel *of God, even as Christ Jesus.* And, *if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me*[24]. Consider the zeal of any church to their pastor, it will come short of the pastor to the church. All that St. Paul saith of the Galatians towards him, is far short of that which he said to the Romans, that he could *wish himself separated from Christ, for his brethren;* or that of Moses, that he would be *blotted out of the book of life*, rather than his charge should. When we consider the manner of hearing sermons, in the Primitive church, though we do not wish that manner to be renewed, yet we cannot deny, but that though it were accompanied with many inconveniences, it testified a vehement devotion, and sense of that that was said, by the preacher, in the hearer; for, all that had been formerly used in theatres, acclamations and plaudits, was brought into the church, and not only the vulgar people, but learned hearers were as loud, and as profuse in those declarations, those vocal acclamations, and those plaudits in the passages, and transitions, in sermons, as ever they

[24] Gal. iv. 14.

had been at the stage, or other recitations of their poets, or orators. St. Hierome charges Vigilantius, that howsoever he differed from him in opinion after, yet when he had heard him preach of the resurrection before, he had received that doctrine with acclamation and plaudits. And as St. Hierome saith of himself, that he was thus applauded in his preaching; he saith it also of him whom he called his master, Gregory Nazianzen, a grave and yet a facetious man, of him he telleth us this story; That he having intreated Nazianzen, to tell him the meaning of that place, what that second Sabbath after the first was[85]? he played with me, he jested at me, saith he, *Eleganter lusit*, and he bade me be at church next time he preached, and he would preach upon that text, *Et toto acclamante populo, cogeris invitus scire quod nescis*, And when you see all the congregation applaud me, and cry out that they are satisfied, you will make yourself believe you understand the place, as they do, though you do not; *Et si solus tacueris, solus ab omnibus stultitiæ condemnaberis*, And if you do not join with the congregation in those plaudits, the whole congregation will think you the only ignorant person in the congregation; for, as we may see in St. Augustine, the manner was, that when the people were satisfied in any point which the preacher handled, they would almost tell him so, by an acclamation, and give him leave to pass to another point; for, so saith that father, *Vidi in voce intelligentes, plures video in silentio requirentes*, I hear many, to whom, by this acclamation, I see, enough hath been said, but I see more that are silent, and therefore, for their sakes, I will say more of it. St. Augustine accepted these acclamations more willingly, at least more patiently, than some of the fathers before had done; *Audistis, laudastis; Deo gratias;* You have heard that that hath been said, and you have approved it with your praise; God be thanked for both; *Et laudes vestræ folia sunt arborum, sed fructus quæro;* Though I look for fruit from you, yet even these acclamations are leaves, and leaves are evidences that the tree is alive. St. Chrysostom was more impatient of them, yet could never overcome them. To him, they came a little closer; for it was ordinary, that when he began to speak, the people would cry out, *Audiamus tertiumdecimum apostolum;* Let us hearken to the

[85] Luke vi. 1.

thirteenth apostle. And he saith, *Si placet, hanc nunc legem firmabimus*[26], I pray let us now establish this for a law, between you and me, *Ne quis auditor plaudat, quamdiu nos loquimur;* That whilst I am speaking, I may hear no *plaudite;* yet he saith in a sermon preached after this, *Animo cogitavi legem ponere*[27], I have often purposed to establish such a law, *Ut decore, et cum silentio audiatis,* That you would be pleased to hear with silence, but he could never prevail.

Sidonius Apollinaris, (a bishop himself, but whether then or no, I know not) saith of another bishop, That hearing even *prædicationes repentinas,* his extemporal sermons, *raucus plausor audivi,* I poured myself out in loud acclamations, till I was hoarse: and, to contract this consideration, we see evidently, that this fashion continued in the church, even to St. Bernard's time. Neither is it left yet in some places, beyond the seas, where the people do yet answer the preacher, if his questions be appliable to them, and may induce an answer, with these vocal acclamations, Sir, we will, Sir, we will not. And truly we come too near re-inducing this vain glorious fashion, in those often periodical murmurings, and noises, which you make, when the preacher concludeth any point; for those impertinent interjections swallow up one quarter of his hour, and many that were not within distance of hearing the sermon, will give a censure upon it, according to the frequency, or paucity of these acclamations.

These fashions then, howsoever, in those times they might be testimonies of zeal, yet because they occasioned vain glory, and many times, faction, (as those fathers have noted) we desire not, willingly we admit not. We come in Christ's stead; Christ at his coming met hosannas and *crucifiges;* a preacher may be applauded in his pulpit, and crucified in his barn: but there is a worse crucifying than that, a piercing of our hearts, *Because we are as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, and you hear our words, and do them not*[28]. Having therefore said thus much to you, first of our manner of proceeding with you, *obsecramus,* of all those ways of humiliation, which we insisted upon, and engaged ourselves in, we pray, and entreat you, and the respect which should come

[26] Hom. 30, in Act. [27] Hom. 31. [28] Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

from you, because we come in Christ's stead, if, as the eunuch said to Philip, *Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized*[19]? so you say to us, We acknowledge that you do your duties, and we do receive you in Christ's stead; what is it that you would have us do? It is but this, *We pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God;* which is our third, and last part, and that to which all that we have said of a good pastor and a good people, (which is the blessedest union of this world) bendeth, and driveth, what, and how blessed a thing it is to be reconciled to God.

Reconciliation is a redintegration, a renewing of a former friendship, that hath been interrupted and broken. So that this implieth a present enmity, and hostility with God; and then a former friendship with God, and also a possibility of returning to that former friendship; stop a little upon each of these, and we have done.

Amongst natural creatures, because howsoever they differ in bigness, yet they have some proportion to one another, we consider that some very little creatures, contemptible in themselves, are yet called enemies to great creatures, as the mouse is to the elephant. (For the greatest creature is not infinite, nor the least is not nothing.) But shall man, between whom and nothing, there went but a word, *Let us make man*, that nothing, which is infinitely less than a mathematical point, than an imaginary atom, shall this man, this yesterday's nothing, this to-morrow worse than nothing, be capable of that honour, that dishonourable honour, that confounding honour, to be the enemy of God, of God who is not only a multiplied elephant, millions of elephants multiplied into one, but a multiplied world, a multiplied all, all that can be conceived by us, infinite many times over; nay, (if we may dare say so,) a multiplied God, a God that hath the millions of the heathens' gods in himself alone, shall this man be an enemy to this God? Man cannot be allowed so high a sin, as enmity with God. The devil himself is but a slave to God, and shall man be called his enemy? It is true, if we consider the infinite disproportion between them, he cannot; but to many sad purposes, and in many heavy applica-

[19] Acts viii. 36.

tions man is an enemy to God. Job could go no higher in expressing his misery, *Why hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy*[30]? and again, *Behold, he findeth occasions against me, and counteth me for his enemy*[31]. So man is an enemy to God; and then to adhere to an enemy, is to become an enemy; for man to adhere to man, to ascribe anything to the power of his natural faculties, to think of any beam of clearness in his own understanding, or any line of rectitude in his own will, this is to accumulate and multiply enmities against God, and to assemble and muster up more, and more man, to fight against God.

A reconciliation is required, therefore there is an enmity; but it is but a reconciliation, therefore there was a friendship; there was a time when God and man were friends, God did not hate man from all eternity, God forbid. And this friendship God meant not to break; God had no purpose to fall out with man, for then he could never have admitted him to a friendship. *Nec hominem amicum quisquam potest fideliter amare, cui se noverit futurum inimicum*[32]: No man can love another as a friend this year, and mean to be his enemy next. God's foreknowledge that man and he should fall out, was not a foreknowledge of anything that he meant to do to that purpose, but only that man himself would become incapable of the continuation of this friendship. Man might have persisted in that blessed amity; and, since if he had done so, the cause of his persisting had been his own will, I speak of the next and immediate cause, (as the cause why the angels that did persist, did persist, was *Bona ipsorum angelorum voluntas*[33]; the good use of their own free-will) much more was the cause of their defection and breaking this friendship in their own will; God therefore having made man, that is mankind, in a state of love, and friendship, God having not by any purpose of his done anything toward the violation of this friendship, in man, in any man, God continueth his everlasting goodness towards man, towards mankind still, in inviting him to accept the means of reconciliation, and a return to the same state of friendship, which he had at first, by our ministry. *Be ye reconciled unto God.*

You see what you had, and how you lost it. If it might not

[30] Job xiii. 24. [31] Job xxxiii. 10.
[32] Augustine. [33] Polanus syntag., to. i. fol. 784.

be recovered, God would not call you to it. It was piously declared in a late synod, that in the offer of this reconciliation, God means, as the minister means; and I am sure I mean it, and desire it to you all; so does God. *Nec Deus est qui inimicitias gerit, sed vos*[34], It is not God, but you, that oppose this reconciliation; *O my people what have I done unto thee*, or *wherein have I grieved thee, testify against me*[35]; testify if I did anything towards inducing an enmity, or do anything towards hindering this reconciliation; which reconciliation is, to be restored to as good an estate in the love of God, as you had in Adam, and our estate is not as good, if it be not as general, if the merit of Christ be not as large, as the sin of Adam; and if it be not as possible for you to be saved by him, as it is impossible for you to be saved without him.

It is therefore but praying you in Christ's stead, that you be reconciled to God. And, if you consider what God is, the Lord of hosts, and therefore hath means to destroy you, or what he is not, he is not man that he can repent, and therefore it belongs to you, to repent first, if you consider what the Lord doth, he that dwells in the heavens doth laugh them to scorn, and hath them in derision, or what he doth not, he doth not justify the wicked balance, nor the bag of deceitful weights[36], if you consider what the Lord would do, *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as the hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not*, or what he would not do, *As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of the wicked*[37], if ye consider all this, any of this, dare you, or can you if you durst, or would you if you could, stand out in an irreconcilable war against God? Especially if you consider, that that is more to you, than what God is, and does, and would do, and can do, for you or against you, that is, what he hath done already; that he who was the party offended, hath not only descended so low, as to be reconciled first, and to pay so dear for that, as the blood of his own, and only Son, but knowing thy necessity better than thyself, he hath reconciled thee to him, though thou knewest it not; *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*, as it

[34] Chrysostom.
[35] Mic. vi. 3.
[36] Mic. vi. 11.
[37] Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

is in the former verse; there the work is done, thy reconciliation is wrought; God is no longer angry so, as to withhold from thee the means; for there it follows, *He hath committed to us the word of reconciliation;* that we might tell you the instrument of reconciliation is drawn between God and you, and, as it is written in the history of the council of Nice[38], that two bishops who died before the establishing of the canons, did yet subscribe and set their names to those canons, which to that purpose were left upon their graves all night, so though you were dead in your sin and enemies to God, and children of wrath, (as all by nature are) when this reconciliation was wrought, yet the Spirit of God may give you this strength, to dip your pens in the blood of the Lamb, and so subscribe your names, by acceptation of this offer of reconciliation. Do but that, subscribe, accept, and then, *cætera omnia*, all the rest that concerns your holy history, your justification and sanctification, *nonne scripta sunt*, are they not written in the books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, says the Holy Ghost, in another case; are they not written in the books of the chronicles of the God of Israel? Shalt thou not find an eternal decree, and a book of life in thy behalf, if thou look for it by this light, and reach to it with this hand, the acceptation of this reconciliation? They are written in those reverend and sacred records, and rolls, and parchments, even the skin and flesh of our blessed Saviour; written in those his stripes, and those his wounds, with that blood, that can admit no *index expurgatorius*, no expunction, no satisfaction; but the life of his death lies in thy acceptation, and though he be come to his, thou art not come to thy *consummatum est*, till that be done.

Do that, and then thou hast put on thy wedding garment. A man might get into that feast, without his wedding garment; so a man may get into the church, to be a visible part of a Christian congregation, without this acceptation of reconciliation, that is the particular apprehension, and application of Christ; but he is still subject to a remove, and to that question of confusion, *Quomodo intrasti*, How came you in? That man in the Gospel could have answered to that question, directly, I came in by the invitation, and conduct of thy servants, I was called in, I was

[38] Binius, to. i. fo. 320.

led in; so they that come hither without this wedding garment, they may answer to Christ's *Quomodo intrasti*, How camest thou in? I came in by faithful parents, to whom, and their seed, thou hast sealed a covenant; I was admitted by thy servants and ministers in baptism, and have been led along by them, by coming to hear them preach thy word, and doing the other external offices of a Christian. But there is more in this question; *Quomodo intrasti*, is not only How didst thou come in, but How durst thou come in? If thou camest to my feast, without any purpose to eat, and so to discredit, to accuse either my meat, or the dressing of it, to quarrel at the doctrine, or at the discipline of my church, *Quomodi intrasti*, How didst thou, how durst thou come in? If thou camest with a purpose to poison my meat, that it might infect others, with a determination to go forward in thy sin, whatsoever the preacher say, and so to encourage others by thy example, *Quomodo intrasti*, How durst thou come in? If thou camest in with thine own provision in thy pocket, and didst not rely upon mine, and think that thou canst be saved without sermons, or sacraments, *Quomodo intrasti*, How durst thou come in? Him that came in there, without this wedding garment, the master of the feast calls friend; but scornfully, *Friend how camest thou in?* But he cast him out. God may call us friends, that is, admit, and allow us the estimation and credit of being of his church, but at one time or other, he shall minister that interrogatory, Friend, how came you in? and for want of that wedding garment, and for want of wearing it in the sight of men, (for it is not said that that man had no such wedding garment at home, in his wardrobe, but that he had none on) for want of sanctification in a holy life, God shall deliver us over to the execution of our own consciences, and eternal condemnation.

But be ye reconciled to God, embrace this reconciliation in making your use of those means, and this reconciliation shall work thus, it shall restore you to that state, that Adam had in paradise. What would a soul oppressed with the sense of sin give, that she were in that state of innocency, that she had in baptism? Be reconciled to God, and you have that, and an elder innocency than that, the innocency of paradise. Go home, and if you find an over-burden of children, negligence in servants,

crosses in your tradings, narrowness, penury in your estate, yet this penurious, and this encumbered house shall be your paradise. Go forth, into the country, and if you find unseasonableness in the weather, rots in your sheep, murrains in your cattle, worms in your corn, backwardness in your rents, oppression in your landlord, yet this field of thorns and brambles shall be your paradise. Lock thyself up in thyself, in thine own bosom, and though thou find every room covered with the soot of former sins, and shaked with that devil whose name is Legion, some such sin as many sins depend upon, and are induced by, yet this prison, this rack, this hell in thine own conscience, shall be thy paradise. And as in paradise Adam at first needed no Saviour, so when by this reconciliation, in apprehending thy Saviour, thou art restored to this paradise, thou shalt need no sub-Saviour, no joint-Saviour, but *cætera adjicientur*, no other angel, but the Angel of the great council, no other saint, but the Holy One of Israel, he who hath wrought this reconciliation for thee, and brought it to thee, shall establish it in thee; *For, if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life*[39]. This is the sum and the end of all, that when God sends humble and laborious pastors, to supple and appliable congregations; that when we pray, and you receive us in Christ's stead, we shall not only find rest in God, but, (as it is said of Noah's sacrifice) God shall find the savour of rest in us; God shall find a Sabbath to himself in us, and rest from his jealousies, and anger towards us, and we shall have a sabbatary life here in the rest and peace of conscience, and a life of one everlasting Sabbath hereafter, where to our rest there shall be added joy, and to our joy glory, and this rest, and joy, and glory superinvested with that which crowns them all, eternity.

[39] Rom. v. 10.

SERMON CXXII.

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S CROSS, 6th MAY, 1627.

HOSEA iii. 4.

For the children of Israel shall abide many days, without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.

SOME cosmographers have said, that there is no land so placed in the world, but that from that land, a man may see other land. I dispute it not, I defend it not; I accept it, and I apply it; there is scarce any mercy expressed in the Scriptures, but that from that mercy you may see another mercy. Christ sets up a candle now here, only to lighten that one room, but as he is *lumen de lumine, light of light*, so he would have more lights lighted at every light of his, and make every former mercy an argument, an earnest, a conveyance of more. Between land and land you may see seas, and seas enraged with tempests; but still, say they, some other land too. Between mercy, and mercy, you may find comminations, and judgments, but still more mercy. For this discovery let this text be our map. First we see land, we see mercy in that gracious compellation, children (the children of Israel) then we see sea, then comes a commination, a judgment that shall last some time, (many days shall the children of Israel suffer) but there they may see land too, another mercy, even this time of judgment shall be a day, they shall not be benighted, nor left in darkness in their judgments; (many days, all the while, it shall be day) then the text opens into a deep ocean, a spreading sea, (*They shall be without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.*) But even from this sea, this vast sea, this sea of devastation, we see land; for in the next verse follows another mercy, (*The children of Israel shall return, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness in the later days.*) And beyond this land, there is no

more sea; beyond this mercy, no more judgment, for with this mercy the chapter ends.

Consider our text then, as a whole globe, as an entire sphere, and then our two hemispheres of this globe, our two parts of this text, will be, first, that no perverseness of ours, no rebellion, no disobedience puts God beyond his mercy, nor extinguishes his love; still he calls Israel, rebellious Israel his children; nay his own anger, his own judgments, then, when he is in the exercise thereof, in the execution thereof, puts him not beyond his mercy, extinguishes not his love; he hides not his face from them then, he leaves them not then, in the dark, he accompanies their calamity with a light, he makes that time, though cloudy, though overcast, yet a day unto them; (the children of Israel shall abide many days in this case.) But then, as no disobedience removes God from himself, (for he is love, and mercy) so no interest of ours in God, doth so privilege us, but that he will execute his judgments upon his children too, even the children of Israel shall fall into these calamities. And from this first part, we shall pass to the second; from these general considerations, (that no punishments should make us desperate, that no favours should make us secure) we shall pass to the particular commination, and judgments upon the children of Israel in this text, without king, without prince, &c.

In our first part, we stop first, upon this declaration of his mercy, in this fatherly appellation, children, (the children of Israel) he does not call them children of Israel, as though he disavowed them, and put them off to another father; but therefore, because they are the children of Israel, they are his children, for, he had married Israel; and married her to himself for ever[1]. Many of us are fathers; and, from God, here may learn tenderness towards children. All of us are children of some parents, and therefore should hearken after the name of father, which is *nomen pietatis et potestatis*[2], a name that argues their power over us, and our piety towards them; and so concerns many of us, in a double capacity, (as we are children, and parents too) but all of us in one capacity, as we are children derived from other parents. God

[1] Hos. ii. 9. [2] Tertullian.

is the father of man, otherwise than he is of other creatures. He is the father of all creatures; so Philo calls all creatures *sorores suas*, his sisters; but then, all those sisters of man, all those daughters of God are not alike married. God hath placed his creatures in divers ranks, and in divers conditions; neither must any man think, that he hath not done the duty of a father, if he have not placed all his sons, or not matched all his daughters, in a condition equal to himself, or not equal to one another. God hath placed creatures in the heavens, and creatures in the earth, and creatures in the sea, and yet, all these creatures are his children, and when he looked upon them all, in their divers stations, he saw, *omnia valde bona*, that all was very well; and that father that employs one son in learning, another to husbandry, another to merchandize, pursues God's example, in disposing his children, (his creatures) diversely, and all well. Such creatures as the rain, (though it may seem but an imperfect, an ignoble creature, fallen from the womb of a cloud) have God for their father; *God is the Father of the rain*[3]. And such creatures as light, have but God for their father. God is *Pater luminum*, the Father of lights[4]. Whether we take lights there to be the angels, created with the light, (some take it so) or to be the several lights set up in the heavens, sun, and moon and stars, (some take it so) or to be the light of grace in infusion by the spirit, or the light of the church, in manifestation, by the word, (for all these acceptations have convenient authors, and worthy to be followed) God is the Father of lights, of all lights; but so he is of rain, and clouds too. And God is the Father of glory[5]; (as St. Paul styles him) of all glory; whether of those beams of glory which he sheds upon us here, in the blessings, and preferments of this life, or that weight of glory[6], which he reserves for us, in the life to come. From that inglorious drop of rain, that falls into the dust, and rises no more, to those glorious saints who shall rise from the dust, and fall no more, but, as they arise at once to the fulness of essential joy, so arise daily in accidental joys, all are the children of God, and all alike of kin to us. And therefore let us not measure our avowing, or our countenancing

[3] Job xxxviii. 28. [4] James i. 17.
[5] Eph. i. 17. [6] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

of our kindred, by their measure of honour, or place, or riches in this world, but let us look how fast they grow in the root, that is, in the same worship of the same God, who is ours, and their Father too. He is nearest of kin to me, that is of the same religion with me; as they are creatures, they are of kin to me by the Father, but as they are of the same church, and religion, by father and mother too.

Philo calls all creatures his sisters, but all men are his brothers. God is the Father of man in a stronger and more peculiar, and more masculine sense, than of other creatures. *Filius particeps et condominus cum patre:* as the law calls the son, the partner of the Father, and fellow-Lord, joint-Lord with the Father, of all the possession that is to descend, so God hath made man his partner, and fellow-Lord of all his other creatures in Moses's *dominamini*[7], when he gives man a power to rule over them, and in David's *Omnia subjecisti*[8], when he imprints there, a natural disposition in the creature to the obedience of man. So high, so very high a filiation, hath God given man, as that, having another son, by another filiation, a higher filiation than this, by an eternal generation, yet he was content, that that son should become this son, that the Son of God should become the Son of man.

God is the Father of all; of man otherwise than of all the rest; but then, of the children of Israel, otherwise than of all other men. For he bought them; and, *is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?* says God by Moses[9]. Not to speak of that purchase, which he made by the death of his Son, (for that belongs to all the world) he bought the Jews in particular, at such a price, such silver, and such gold, such temporal, and such spiritual benefits, such a land, and such a church, such a law, and such a religion, as, certainly, he might have had all the world at that price. If God would have manifested himself, poured out himself to the nations, as he did to the Jews, all the world would have swarmed to his obedience, and herded in his pale. God was their father; and, as St. Chrysostom, (that he might be sure to draw in all degrees of tender affection) calls him, *their mother* too. For, *Matris nutrire, patris erudire;* It was a

[7] Gen. i. 28. [8] Psalm viii. 7. [9] Deut. xxxii. 6.

mother's part to give them suck, and to feed them with temporal blessings; it was a father's part to instruct them, and to feed them with spiritual things; and God did both abundantly. Therefore doth God submit himself to the comparison of a mother in the prophet Esay[10], *Can a woman forget her sucking child?* But then, he stays not in that inferior, in that infirmer sex, but returns to a stronger love, than that of a mother, Yes, says he, *she may forget, yet will not I forget thee.* And therefore, when David says, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits*[11]; David expresses that, which we translate in a general word, benefits, in this word, *gamal*, which signifies *ablactationes;* forget not that God nursed thee as a mother, and then, *ablactavit*, weaned thee, and provided thee stronger food, out of the care of a father. In one word, all creatures are God's children; man is his son; but then, Israel is his first-born son; for that is the addition, which God gives Israel by Moses to Pharaoh, *Say unto Pharaoh, Israel is my son, even my first-born*[12]. Why God adopted Israel into this filiation, into this primogeniture, before all the people of the world, we can assign no reason, but his love only. But why he did not before this text, disinherit this adopted son, is a higher degree, and exercise of his love, than the adoption itself, if we consider, (which is a useful consideration) their manifold provocations to such an exhæredation, and what God suffered at their hands.

The ordinary causes of exhæredation, for which a man might disinherit his son, are assigned and numbered in the law, to be fourteen. But divers of them grow out of one root (undutifulness, inofficiousness towards the father), and as, by that reason, they may be extended to more, so they may be contracted to fewer, to two. These two, ingratitude, and irreligion. Unthankfulness, and idolatry were ever just causes of exhæredation, of disinheriting. And with these two, did the Jews more provoke Almighty God, than any children any father. Stop we a little our consideration upon each of these.

He is not always ungrateful, that does not recompense a benefit, but he only that would not, though he could make, and

[10] Isaiah xlix. 15. [11] Psalm ciii. 1. [12] Exod. iv. 22.

though the benefactor needed a recompense. When Furnius, upon whom Augustus had multiplied benefits, told him, that in one thing he had damnified him, in one thing he had undone him, *Effecisti ut viverem et morerer ingratus*, You have done so much for me, (says he) that I must live, and die unthankful, that is, without showing my thankfulness by equivalent recompenses: this which he calls unthankfulness, was thankfulness enough. There are men, (says the moral man) *qui quo plus debent, magis oderunt*[13], that hate those men most, who have laid most obligations upon them. *Leve æs alienum debitorem facit, grave inimicum;* For a little debt he will be content to look towards me, but when it is great, more than he can pay, or as much as he thinks he can get from me, then he would be glad to be rid of me. Acknowledgment is a good degree of thankfulness. But, ingratitude at the highest, (and the Jews' ingratitude was at the highest) involves even a concealing, and a denying of benefits, and even a hating, and injuring of benefactors. And so, *Res peremptoria ingratitudo*, says Bernard significantly, Ingratitude is a peremptory sin; it does *perimere*, that is, destroy, not only all virtues, but it destroys, that is, overflows all other particular vices; no vice can get a name, where ingratitude is; it swallows all, devours all, becomes all; *Ingratum dicas, omnia dixisti*, If you have called a man unthankful, you have called him by all the ill names that are: for this complicated, this manifold, this preguant vice, ingratitude, the holy language, the Hebrew, lacks a word. The nearest root that they can draw ingratitude into, is *caphar*, and *caphar* is but *tegere*, to hide, to conceal a benefit; but to deny a benefit, or to hate or injure a benefactor, they have not a word. And therefore, as St. Hierome found not the word in the Hebrew, so in all St. Hierome's translation of the Old Testament, (or in that which is reputed his, the Vulgate edition) you have not that Latin word, *ingratus;* curious sinners, subtile self-damners; they could not name ingratitude, and in all the steps of ingratitude, they exceeded all men, all nations. From the ingratitude of murmuring, upon which God lays that woe, *Woe unto him that says to his father, What begettest thou? Or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth*[14]? A dog murmurs not

[13] Seneca. [14] Isaiah xlv. 10.

that he is not a lion, nor a blind-worm without eyes, that he is not a basilisk to kill with his eyes; dust murmurs not that it is not amber, nor a dunghill that it is not a mine, nor an angel that he is not of the seraphim; and every man would be something else than God hath made him, from this murmuring for that which he hath not, to another degree of ingratitude, the appropriation of that which he hath, to himself, *Uti datis tanquam innatis*, (as St. Bernard speaks in his music) To attribute to ourselves that which we have received from God, to think ourselves as strong in nature as in grace, and as safe in our own free-will, as in the love of God; as God says of Jerusalem, (that *he had given her her beauty, and then she played the harlot, as if it had been her own*[15]) by these steps of ingratitude to the highest of all, which is, rather than to confess herself beholden to God, to change her God, and so to slide from ingratitude to idolatry, Jerusalem came, and over-went all the nations upon the earth.

Their ingratitude induced idolatry in an instant. As soon as they came to that ungrateful murmuring, (*As for Moses we cannot tell what is become of him*[16]) they came presently to say to Aaron, (*Up and make us gods that may go before us*) which is an impotency, a leprosy, that derives itself far, spreads far, that as soon as our sins induce any worldly cross, any calamity upon us, we come to think of another church, another religion, and conclude, that that cannot be a good church, in which we have lived in. Now, against this impious levity, of facility in changing our religion, God seems to express the greatest indignation, when he says, *They sacrificed unto gods whom they knew not, to new gods*[17]. Men, amongst us, that have been baptized, and catechized in the truth, and in the knowledge thereof, fall into ignorant falsehood, and embrace a religion which they understand not, nor can understand, because it lies in the breast of one man, and is therefore subject to alterations. *They sacrifice to gods whom they know not*, (says God) and those gods new gods too; the more suspicious, for their newness; and, (as it is added there) *unto gods whom their fathers feared not.* Men, that fall from us (whose fathers were of that religion) put themselves into more

[15] Ezek. xvi. [16] Exod. xxxii. 1. [17] Deut. xxxii. 17.

bondage and slavery to the court of Rome now, than their fathers did to the church of Rome then; they sacrifice to gods, whom they know not, and whom their fathers feared not, so much as they do. But, they have corrupted themselves; (as God charges them farther) they are fallen from us, whom no example of their fathers led that way; fathers have left their former superstition, which they were born and bred in, and the sons, which were born, and bred in the truth, have embraced those superstitions; *Their spot is not the spot of children*, (so it follows in the same place) a weakness that might have that excuse, that they proceeded out of a reverential respect to their fathers, and followed their example; (*for their fathers have stood, and they are fallen*). (*Their spot is not the spot of children*). And, because kings are pictures of God, when they turn upon new gods, they turn to new pictures of God too, and with a foreign religion, invest a foreign allegiance. *Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians*, says God, and *from the Ammonites*, and *from the Amorites*, and *Philistines*[18]? From a succession of enemies, at times, and from a league of enemies at once, *Yet you have forsaken me, and served other gods*, says God there; and therefore (to that resolution God comes), *Therefore, I will deliver you no more.* And yet, how often did God deliver them after this? Ingratitude, idolatry, are just causes of exhæredation; Israel abounded in both these, and yet, after all these, in this text, he calls them children, *The children of Israel*, and therefore his children.

God is kind even to the unthankful, saith Christ himself, and himself calls Jerusalem, *The holy city*[19], even when she was defiled with many and manifold uncleannesses, because she had been holy, and had the outward help of holiness remaining in her still. Christ doth not disavow, not disinherit those children which gave most just cause of exhæredation; much less doth he justify, by his example, final and total disinheriting of children, occasioned by single and small faults in the children, and grounded in the parents, upon sudden, and passionate, and intemperate, and imaginary vows, they have vowed to do it, therefore they will do

[18] Judges x. 11. [19] Luke vi. 35; Matt. iv. 5.

it; for, so they put a pretext of religion upon their impiety, and make God accessary to that which he dislikes, and upon colour of a vow, do that which is far from a service to God, as the performance of every lawful, and discreet vow is. God calls them his children, (which is one) and then, though as a father he correct them, yet he shows them his face, in that correction, (which is another beam of his mercy) he calls their calamity, their affliction, not a night, but a day, (many days shall the children of Israel suffer this).

We find these two words often joined together in the Scriptures, *Dies visitationis, The day of visitation;* though as it is a visitation, it be a sad, a dark contemplation, yet as it is a day, it hath always a cheerfulness in it. If it were called a night, I might be afraid, that this night, they (I am not told who) *would fetch away my soul*[20]; but, being a day, I have assurance, that the sun, the sun of righteousness will arise to me. *At the light of thine arrows, they went forward*, saith the prophet Habakkuk[21]. Though they be arrows, yet they are torches too, though they burn, yet they give light too; though God shoot his arrows at me, even by them, I shall have light enough to see, that it is God that shoots. As there is a heavy commination in that of Amos[22], *I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth, in clear day;* so is there a gracious promise, and a constant practice in God, that he will (as he hath done) command light of darkness, and enable thee to see a clear day, by his presence, in the darkest night of tribulation. For, truly, such a sense, I think, belongs to those words in Hosea[23], that when God had said, *The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come*, God adds that, as an aggravating of the calamity; *yea, woe also to them, when I depart from them;* as though the oppression of the affliction, the peremptoriness of the affliction, were not in the affliction itself, but in God's departing from them, when he afflicted them; they should be visited, but see no day in their visitations, afflicted from God, but see no light from him, receive no consolation in him. In this place we take it, (for the exaltation of your devotion) as a particular beam of

[20] Luke xii. 20. [21] Hab. iii. 11.
[22] Amos viii. 9. [23] Hosea ix. 12.

his mercy, that though the children of Israel were afflicted many days, yet still he affords them the name of children, and still their dark and cloudy days were accompanied with the light, and presence of God, still they felt the hand of God under them, the face of God upon them, the heart of God towards them.

Those then, which have this filiation, God doth not easily disinherit; because they were his children, after natural disobediences, he avows them, and continues that name to them. But yet, this must not imprint a security, a presumption; for, even the children here, are submitted to heavy and dangerous calamities; when Christ himself saith, *The children of the kingdom shall be cast into utter darkness*[24], who can promise himself a perpetual, or unconditioned station? We have in the Scriptures two especial types of the church, paradise, and the ark. But, in that type, the ark, we are principally instructed, what the church in general shall do, and in that in paradise, what particular men in the church should do. For, we do not read, that in the ark Noah, or his company, did weigh any anchor, hoist any sail, ship any oar, steer any rudder; but, the ark, by the providence of God, who only was pilot, rode safe upon the face of the waters. The church itself, (figured by the ark) cannot shipwreck; though men sleep, though the devil wake, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church*[25]. But in the other type of the church, where every man is instructed in his particular duty therein, paradise, Adam himself was commanded to dress paradise, and to keep paradise[26]. And when he did not that which he was enjoined to do in that place, he forfeited his interest in it, and his benefit by it. Though we be born and bred in God's house, as children baptized, and catechized in the true church, if we slacken our holy industry in making sure our salvation, we, though children of the kingdom, may be cast out, and all our former helps, and our proceedings by the benefit of those helps, shall but aggravate our condemnation. Alpha and Omega make up the name of Christ; and, between Alpha and Omega, are all the letters of the alphabet included. A Christian is made up of Alpha and Omega, and all between. He must begin well, (embrace the

[24] Matt. viii. 12. [25] Matt. xvi. 18. [26] Gen. ii. 15.

true church) and live well according to the profession of that true church, and die well, according to that former holy life, and practice. Truth in the beginning, zeal all the way, and constancy in the end make up a Christian. Otherwise for all this filiation, children may be disinherited, or submitted to such calamities as these which are interminated upon the children of Israel, which constitute our second part, *They shall be without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim.*

Disobedient children are not cast off; but yet disobedience is not left uncorrected. Be merciful, but merciful so, as your *Father in heaven is merciful;* be not so merciful upon any private respect, as to be thereby cruel to the public. And be just; but, just, as your Father in heaven is just; hate not the vice of a man so, as thereby to hate the man himself. God hath promised to *be an enemy to our enemies, an adversary to our adversaries*[27]; but God is no irreconcilable enemy, no implacable, no inexorable adversary. For, that hatred which David calls *Odium perfectum, I have hated them with a perfect hatred*[28], is not only a vehement hatred, but (as St. Hilary calls it) *Odium religiosum*, A hatred that may consist with religion: that I hate not another man, for his religion, so as that I lose all religion in myself, by such a hating of him. And St. Augustine calls it *Odium charitativum*, A hate that may consist with charity; that I hate no man for his peremptory uncharitableness towards my religion, so as to lose mine own charity; for, I am come to one point of his religion, if I come to be as uncharitable as he. God and kings are at a near distance, all gods; magistrates, and inferior persons are at a near distance, all dust. As God proceeds with a king, with Jehoshaphat[29], in that temper, that moderation, *Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?* So men with men, magistrates with inferior men, learned men with ignorant men, should proceed with St. Paul's moderation, If any man obey not (but be refractory, unconformable) note that man, saith the apostle, *and have no company with him*, but *yet count him not as an enemy*[30]. The union of the two natures in Christ, gives us a

[27] Exod. xxiii. 22. [28] Psalm cxxxix. 22.
[29] 2 Chron. xix. 2. [30] 2 Thess. iii. 14.

fair example, that divinity and humanity may consist together. No religion induces inhumanity; no piety, no zeal destroys nature; and since there is *a time to hate, and a time to love*[31], then is love most seasonable, when other civil contracts, civil alliances, civil concurrences, have suppled and intenerated the dispositions of persons, or nations, formerly farther asunder, to a better possibility, to a fairer probability, to a nearer propinquity of hearkening to one another, *That Christ might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby*[32]. Civil offices may work upon religious too; and where that may follow, (that our mildness in civil things, may prevail upon their obduration in religion) there is the time to love. But in cases, where civil peace and religious foundations are both shaked, that the state and the church, as they are both in one bottom, so they are chased by one pirate, I hate not with a perfect hatred, not perfect towards God, except I declare, and urge, and press home, the truth of God, against their errors in my ministry, nor perfect towards man, except I advance, in my place, the execution of those laws against their practices, without which, they are enabled, nay encouraged, nay persuaded, nay entreated to go forward in those practices. God himself proceeds against his own children so far, (and dearer than those children were to God, can no friends be to us, no allies to any prince) that *they should be without king, without prince, without sacrifice, without image, without ephod, without teraphim;* that is, without temporal, without ecclesiastical government.

First, then, we presume, we presuppose, (and that necessarily) every piece of this part of our text, to fall under the commination; they were threatened with the loss of every particular, and therefore they were the worse for every particular loss. Not the worse only because they thought themselves the worse, because they had fixed their love and their delight upon these things, but because they were really the better for having them, it was really a curse, a commination, that they should lose them; as well that they should lose their ephod, and their image, and their teraphim, as that they should lose their sacrifices. But first, (though that other fall also within the commination, that they should be

[31] Eccles. viii. 3. [32] Eph. ii. 16.

without a settled form of religion, without sacrifice, and ephod, and the rest), the first thing that the commination falls upon, is, that they should be without a civil form of government, without king, and without prince. For, though our religion prepare us to our *bene esse*, our well-being, our everlasting happiness, yet it is the state, the civil and peaceable government, which preserves our very *esse*, our very being; and there cannot be a *bene esse*, without an *esse*, a well and a happy being, except there be first a being established. It is the state, the law, that constitutes families and cities, and propriety, and magistracy, and jurisdiction. The state, the law preserves and distinguishes, not only the *meum et tuum*, the possessions of men, but the *me et te*, the very persons of men; the law tells me, not only whose land I must call every acre, but whose son I must call every man. Therefore God made the body before the soul; therefore there is in man a vegetative, and a sensitive soul, before an immortal, and reasonable soul enter. Therefore also, in this place, God proposes first the civil state, the temporal government, (what it is, to have a king and a prince) before he proposes the happiness of a church, and a religion; not but that our religion conduces to the greater happiness, but that our religion cannot be conserved, except the civil state, and temporal government be conserved too.

The first thing then that the commination falls upon, is the loss of their temporal state. But the commination doth not fall so fully upon the exclusion of all forms of government, as upon the exclusion of monarchy; it does not so expressly threaten an anarchy, that they should have no government, no governors; it is not *sine regimine*, but *sine rege*, if they had any, they should not have the best, they should be without a king. Now, if with St. Hierome, and others that accompany him in that interpretation, we take the prophecy of this text, to be fulfilled in that dispersion which hath continued upon the Jews, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews have been so far from having had any king, as that they have not had a constable of their own, in any part of the world; no interest at all, in any part of the magistracy and jurisdiction of the world, anywhere, but they are

a whole nation of Cains, fugitives, and vagabonds[33]. But howsoever it be, the heat, and the vehemency of this commination falls upon this particular, *sine rege*, they shall be without a king. It was long before God afforded the Jews a king; and he did not easily do it, then when he did it. Not, that he intended not that form of government for them, but because they would extort it from him, before his time, and because they asked it only in that respect, *that they might be like their neighbours*, to whom God would not have had them too like: and also, because God, to keep their thankfulness still awake, would reserve, and keep back some better thing, than he had given them yet, to give them at last. For, so he says, (as the coronation of all his benefits to Israel, of which there is a glorious inventory in that chapter) *Thou didst prosper into a kingdom*[34]; till the crown of glory be presented, in the coming of the Messias, thou canst not be happier. Those therefore that allow but a conditional sovereignty in a kingdom, an arbitrary, a temporary sovereignty, that may be transferred at the pleasure of another, they oppose the *nolumus hoc*, we would not have, we would not live under this form of government, not under a temporal monarchy, *nolumus hoc*. Those that determine allegiance, and civil obedience only by their own religion, and think themselves bound to obey none, that is of another persuasion, they oppose the *nolumus hunc*, *We will not have this man to reign over us;* and so, make their relations, and fix their dependences upon foreign hopes, *nolumus hunc*. Those that fix a super-sovereignty in the people, or in a presbytery, they oppose the *nolumus sic*, we would not have things carried thus; they pretend to know the happiness of living under that form, a kingdom, and to acknowledge the person of the king, but they would be governed every man according to his own mind. And all these, the *nolumus hoc*, (they that desire not the continuance of that form, of a kingdom in an independency, but would have a dependency upon a foreign power;) and the *nolumus hunc*, (they that are disaffected to the person of him that governs for the present;) and the *nolumus sic*, (they that will prescribe to the king, ends, and ways to those ends:) all these assist this male-

[33] Gen. iv. 12. [34] Ezek. xvi. 13.

diction, this commination, which God interminates here, as the greatest calamity, *sine rege*, they shall be without a king; for this is to canton out a monarchy, to ravel out a kingdom, to crumble out a king.

There is another branch in this part, which is of temporal calamities, that they shall be *sine principe*, without a king, and without a prince. The word in the original is *sar;* and take it, as it sounds most literally in our translation, the prince is the king's son; so, this very word is used in Esay; *Sar salom;* the Son of God, is called the *Prince of peace*[35]. And so, the commination upon the Jews is thus far aggravated, that they shall be without a prince, that is, without a certain heir, and successor; which uncertainty, (more than anything else) slackens the industry of all men at home, and sharpens the malice of all men abroad; fears at home, and hopes abroad, discompose and disorder all, where they are *sine principe*, without a certain heir. But the word enlarges itself farther; for *sar* signifies a judge; when Moses rebuked a malefactor, he replies to Moses, *Who made thee a judge*[36]*?* And in many, very many places, *sar* signifies a commander in the wars. So that where the justice of the state, or the military power of the state fail, (and they fail, where the men who do, or should execute those places, will not, or dare not do, what appertains to their places) there this commination falls, *they are without a prince*, that is, without future assurance, without present power, or justice.

But we pass to the spiritual commination; that is, they shall be *without sacrifice, without ephod, without image, without teraphim.* It is not that their understanding shall be taken away, no, nor that the tenderness of their conscience, or their zeal shall be taken away; it is not that they shall come to any impiety, or ill opinion of God; they may have religious, and well-disposed hearts, and yet be under a curse, if they have not a church, an outward discipline established amongst them. It is not enough for a man to believe aright, but he must apply himself to some church, to some outward form of worshipping God; it is not enough for a church, to hold no error in doctrine, but it must have outward assistances for the devotion of her children, and

[35] Isaiah ix. 9. [36] Exod. ii. 3.

outward decency for the glory of her God. Both these kinds are intended in the particulars of this text, sacrifice and ephod, image and teraphim.

First, it is a part of the curse, to be without sacrifice. Now, if according to St. Hierome's interpretation, this text be a prophecy upon the Jews, after Christ's time, and that the malediction consist in this, that they shall not embrace the Christian religion, nor the Christian church entertain them; if the prophet drive to this, they shall be without sacrifices, because they shall not be of the Christian church, certainly the Christian church is not to be without sacrifice. It is a miserable impotency, to be afraid of words; that from a former holy and just detestation of real errors, we should come to an uncharitable detestation of persons, and to a contentious detestation of words. We dare not name merit, nor penance, nor sacrifice, nor altar, because they have been abused. How should we be disappointed, and disfurnished of many words in our ordinary conversation, if we should be bound from all words, which blasphemous men have profaned, or unclean men have defiled with their ill use of those words? There is merit, there is penance, there is sacrifice, there are altars, in that sense, in which those blessed men, who used those words first, at first used them. The communion table is an altar; and in the sacrament there is a sacrifice. Not only a sacrifice of thanksgiving, common to all the congregation, but a sacrifice peculiar to the priest, though for the people. There he offers up to God the Father, (that is, to the remembrance, to the contemplation of God the Father) the whole body of the merits of Christ Jesus, and begs of him, that in contemplation of that sacrifice so offered, of that body of his merits, he would vouchsafe to return, and to apply those merits to that congregation. A sacrifice, as far from their blasphemous over-boldness, who constitute a propitiatory sacrifice, in the church of Rome, as from their over-tenderness, who startle at the name of sacrifice. We do not, (as at Rome) first invest the power of God, and make ourselves able to make a Christ, and then invest the malice of the Jews, and kill that Christ, whom we have made; for, sacrifice, immolation, (taken so properly, and literally as they take it) is a killing; but the whole body of Christ's actions and passions, we sacrifice, we

represent, we offer to God. Calvin alone, hath said enough, *Non possumus*, Except we be assisted with outward things, we cannot fix ourselves upon God. Therefore is it part of the malediction here, that they shall be *sine sacrificio*, without sacrifice; so is it also in inferior helps, *sine ephod*, they shall be without an ephod.

The ephod amongst the Jews, was a garment, which did not only distinguish times, (for it was worn only in time of divine service) but, even in time of divine service, it distinguished persons too. For we have a pontifical ephod, peculiar only to the high priest[37]; and we have a Levitical ephod, belonging to all the Levites[38]; *Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod.* And we have a common ephod, which any man that assisted in the service of God might wear; that linen ephod, which David put on, in that procession, when he danced before the ark[39]. But all these ephods were bound under certain laws, to be worn by such men, and at such times. Christ's garment was not divided; nay, the soldiers were not divided about it, but agreed in one way; and shall we, the body of Christ, be divided about the garment, that is, vary in the garment, by denying a conformity to that decency which is prescribed? When Christ divested, or suppressed the majesty of his outward appearance, at his resurrection, Mary Magdalen took him but for a gardener[40]. Ecclesiastical persons in secular habits, lose their respect. Though the very habit be but a ceremony, yet the distinction of habits is rooted in nature, and in morality; and when the particular habit is enjoined by lawful authority, obedience is rooted in nature, and in morality too. In a watch, the string moves nothing, but yet it conserves the regularity of the motion of all. Ritual, and ceremonial things move not God, but they exalt that devotion, and they conserve that order, which does move him. Therefore is it also made a part of the commination, that they shall be *sine ephod*, without these outward ritual, and ceremonial solemnities of a church; first, without sacrifices, which are more substantial and essential parts of religion, (as we consider religion to be the outward worship of

[37] Exod. xxvi. 6. [38] 1 Sam. ii. 18.
[39] 2 Sam. vi. 14. [40] John xx. 15.

God,) and then, without ephod, without those other assistances, which, though they be not of God's revenue, yet they are of his subsidies, and though they be not the soul, yet are the breath of religion. And so also is it of things of a more inferior nature than sacrifice or ephod, that is of image and teraphim, which is our next, and last consideration.

Both these words, (that which is translated, and called image, and that which is not translated, but kept in the original word, teraphim) have sometimes a good, sometimes a bad sense in the Scriptures. In the first, image, there is no difficulty; good and bad significations of that word, are obvious everywhere. And for the other, though when Rachel stole her father's teraphim[41], (images) though when the king of Babylon consulted with teraphim[42], (images) the word teraphim have an ill sense, yet, when Michal, David's wife, put an image into his bed, to elude the fury of Saul[43], there the word hath no ill sense. Accept the words in an idolatrous sense, yet, because they fall under the commination, and that God threatens it, as a part of their calamity, that they should be without their idols, it hath been, not inconveniently, argued from this place, that even a religion mixed with some idolatry, and superstition, is better than none, as in civil government a tyranny is better than an anarchy. And therefore we must not bring the same indisposition, the same disaffection towards a person misled, and soured with some leaven of idolatry, as towards a person possessed with atheism. And yet, how ordinarily we see zealous men start, and affected, and troubled at the presence of a papist, and never moved, never forbear the society and conversation of an atheist: which is an argument too evident, that we consider ourselves more than God, and that peace which the papist endangers, more than the atheist, (which is, the peace of the state, and a quiet enjoying our ease) above the glory of God, which the atheist wounds, and violates more than the papist; the papist withdraws some of the glory of God, in ascribing it to the saints, to themselves, and their own merits, but the atheist leaves no God to be glorified. And this use we have of these words, images, and teraphim, if they should have an ill sense in this place, and signify idols.

[41] Gen. xxxi. 19. [42] Ezek. xxi. 21. [43] 1 Sam. xix. 13.

But St. Hierome, and others with him, take these words, in a good sense; to be the cherubim, and palms, and such other representations, as God himself had ordained in their temple; and that the commination falls upon this, that in some cases, it may be some want, to be without some pictures in the church. So far as they may conduce to a reverend adoring of the place, so far as they may conduce to a familiar instructing of unlettered people, it may be a loss to lack them. For, so much Calvin, out of his religious wisdom, is content to acknowledge, *Fateor, ut res se habet hodie*[44], &c. I confess, as the case stands now, (says he, speaking of the beginning of the Reformation) there are many that could not be without those books, (as he calls those pictures) because then they had no other way of instruction; but, that that might be supplied, if those things which were delivered in picture, to their eyes, were delivered in sermons to their ears. And this is true, that where there is a frequent preaching, there is no necessity of pictures; but will not every man add this, that if the true use of pictures be preached unto them, there is no danger of an abuse; and so, as remembrancers of that which hath been taught in the pulpit, they may be retained; and that was one office of the Holy Ghost himself, that he should bring to their remembrance those things, which had been formerly taught them. And since, by being taught the right use of these pictures, in our preaching, no man amongst us is any more inclined, or endangered to worship a picture in a wall or window of the church, than if he saw it in a gallery, were it only for a reverent adorning of the place, they may be retained here, as they are in the greatest part of the reformed church, and in all that, is properly Protestant. And though the injunctions of our church[45], declare the sense of those times, concerning images, yet they are wisely and godly conceived; for the second is, that they shall not extol images, (which is not, that they shall not set them up) but, (as it followeth) they shall declare the abuse thereof. And when in the twenty-third injunction, it is said, that they shall utterly extinct, and destroy, (amongst other things) pictures, yet it is limited to such things, and such pictures, as are monuments of

[44] Institut. i. 11. § 7.

[45] 1 Eliz. 1559.

feigned miracles; and that injunction reaches as well to pictures in private houses, as in churches, and forbids nothing in the church, that might be retained in the house. For those pernicious errors, which the Roman church hath multiplied in this point, not only to make images of men, which never were, but to make those images of men, very men, to make their images speak, and move, and weep, and bleed; to make images of God who was never seen, and to make those images of God, very gods; to make their images do daily miracles; to transfer the honour due to God, to the image, and then to encumber themselves with such ridiculous riddles, and scornful distinctions, as they do, for justifying unjustifiable, unexcusable, uncolourable enormities, *Væ idololatris*, woe to such advancers of images, as would throw down Christ, rather than his image: but *Væ iconoclastis* too, woe to such peremptory abhorrers of pictures, and to such uncharitable condemners of all those who admit any use of them, as had rather throw down a church, than let a picture stand. Laying hold upon St. Hierome's exposition, that falls within the *væ*, the commination of this text, to be without those sacrifices, those ephods, those images, as they are outward helps of devotion. And, laying hold, not upon St. Hierome, but upon Christ himself, who is the God of love, and peace, and unity, yet falls under a heavy, and insupportable *væ*, to violate the peace of the church, for things which concern it not fundamentally. Problematical things are our silver, but fundamental, our gold; problematical our sweat, but fundamental our blood. If our adversaries would be bought in, with our silver, with our sweat, we should not be difficult in meeting them half way, in things, in their nature, indifferent. But if we must pay our gold, our blood, our fundamental points of religion, for their friendship, a fortune, a liberty, a wife, a child, a father, a friend, a master, a neighbour, a benefactor, a kingdom, a church, a world, is not worth a drachm of this gold, a drop of this blood. Neither will that man, who is truly rooted in this foundation, redeem an impoverishing, an imprisoning, a disinheriting, a confining, an excommunicating, a deposing, with a drachm of this gold, with a drop of this blood, the fundamental articles of our religion. Blessed be that God,

who, as he is without change or colour of change, hath kept us without change, or colour of change, in all our foundations; and he in his time bring our adversaries to such a moderation as becomes them, who do truly desire, that the church may be truly Catholic, one flock, in one fold, under one Shepherd, though not all of one colour, of one practice in all outward and disciplinarian points. Amen.

SERMON CXXIII.

A SERMON PREACHED IN ST. PAUL'S IN THE EVENING, NOVEMBER 23, 1628.

PROVERBS XIV. 31.

He that oppresseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker, but he that honoureth him, hath mercy on the poor.

Part of the first Lesson, for that Evening Prayer.

THESE are such words, as if we were to consider the words only, might make a grammar lecture, and a logic lecture, and a rhetoric and ethic, a philosophy lecture too; and of these four elements might a better sermon than you are like to hear now, be well made. Indeed they are words of a large, of an extensive comprehension. And because all the words of the Word of God, are, in a great measure, so, that invites me to stop a little, as upon a short first part before the rest, or as upon a long entry into the rest, to consider, not only the powerfulness of the matter, but the sweetness and elegancy of the words of the Word of God in general, before I descend to the particular words of this text, *He that oppresseth the poor, &c.*

We may justly accommodate those words of Moses, to God the Father, *What God is there in heaven, or in earth, that can do according to thy works*[1]? And those words of Jeremy, to God the Son, *Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow, like unto my*

[1] Deut. iii. 24.

sorrow[2]; and those to the Holy Ghost which are in Esay, *Loquimini, ad cor, Speak to the heart, speak comfortably to my people*[3], and those of St. John too, *A voice of thunder*[4], and after, *A voice of seven thunders talking with me*[5]: for who can do, like the Father, who can suffer like the Son, who can speak like the Holy Ghost? *Eloquia Domini, eloquia casta*, saith David, *The words of the Lord are chaste words, sincere, pure words*[6], no dross, no profaneness, no such alloy mingled with them; for, as it followeth there, *They are as silver tried and purified seven times in the fire.* They are as that silver, that is so tried, and they are as that fire that trieth it. It is *castum*, a pure word in itself, and then it is powerful upon the hearer too; *Ignitum eloquium tuum vehementer*, saith he, Thy word hath the vehement operation of fire; and therefore, thy servant loveth it well, as it followeth there[7]; therefore, because it pierces; but therefore especially, because it carrieth a sweetness with it. For the sting of the serpent pierces; and the tooth of the viper pierces, but they carry *venenosam salivam*, a venomous and mischievous liquor with them. But *Dulcia faucibus super mel*, Thy *words are sweeter to my mouth, than honey*[8]; than honey itself. For, *Verba composita*, saith Solomon, chosen words, studied, premeditated words, pleasing words, (so we translate it) are as a honey-comb[9]. Now, in the honey-comb, the honey is collected and gathered, and dispensed, and distributed from the honey-comb, and of this honey-comb is wax, wax apt for sealing, derived too. The distribution of this honey to the congregation, the sealing of this honey to the conscience, is in the outward ordinance of God, and in the labour of the minister, and his conscionable fitting of himself for so great a service. But the honey-comb is not the honey, the gifts of the man, is not the Holy Ghost. Jacob laid this blessing upon his son Naphtali, *Dabit eloquia pulchritudinis*[10]; That he should be a well-spoken, and a persuasive man. For, of a defect in this kind, Moses complained, and so did Esay, and Jeremy did so too, when they were to be employed in God's service, Moses that he was of uncircumcised, Esay that he was of unclean

[2] Lam. i. 12. [3] Isaiah xiv. 2. [4] Rev. iv. 1.
[5] Rev. x. 3. [6] Psalm xii. 6. [7] Psalm cxix. 140.
[8] Psalm cxix. 103. [9] Prov. xvi. 24. [10] Gen. xlix. 21.

lips, and Jeremy that he was a child, and could not speak; and therefore this was a blessing upon Naphtali, that he should be a well-spoken, and persuasive man. For so Moses, after God had farther enabled him, saith, *Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; hear O earth, the words of my mouth, my mouth*, saith Moses[11]; the minister of God, that cometh with convenient gifts, and due preparation, may speak such things, as earth, and heaven itself may be content to hear. For, when St. Paul saith[12], *That to the principalities, and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God, is made known by the church*, that is, by the ministry, and service of the church, and by that which is done here, we may congruously and piously believe, that even those principalities and powers in heavenly places, the angels of heaven do hear our sermons, and hearken how the glory of God is communicated, and accepted, and propagated through the congregation; and as they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, so rejoice also at the means of their conversion, the powerful, and the congruous preaching of the word of God. And therefore, let no man, though an angel of the church, though an archangel of the church, bishop or archbishop, refuse to hear a man of inferior place, or inferior parts to himself; neither let any man be discouraged by the fewness or meanness of his hearers: for, as the apostle saith, with relation to Abraham, *Entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares*[13], so, preach to all, and that seat that thou thinkest empty, may have angels in it: to them is the manifold wisdom of God made known by the church, and angels are here; here, for the augmentation of their own joy, in their fresh knowledge of the propagation of the kingdom of God, in this congregation, and they are here, for their accusation that are not here, but frivolously and causelessly absent, or negligently, absently present, if they be here. Therefore Moses might say, Give hear O ye heavens, though it be but I, that speak; and he might add, as he doth there, *My doctrine shall drop as the rain, and my speech shall distil as the dew.* And why? *Because I will publish the name of the Lord*, saith Moses there; because I will deliver the messages of my God to his people.

[11] Deut. xxxii. 1. [12] Ephes. iii. 10. [13] Heb. xiii. 2.

What though you do, must this be ascribed unto you? no, Moses claimeth not that; for when he had said, Give ear, O ye heavens, (let no man think himself too high, or too wise to hear me) and called it his doctrine, and his speech, because he published the name of the Lord, yet he transferreth all upon God himself, he establisheth their attentions with that Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. It becometh me to make myself as acceptable a messenger as I can, and to infuse the word of God into you, as powerfully as I can, but all that I can do, is but a small matter, the greatness of the work lieth in your application, and that must proceed from the Word of God itself, quickened by his Spirit, and therefore Ascribe all greatness unto our God, for that is the honey, whatsoever, or whosoever be the honeycomb. Truly, when I read a sermon of Chrysostom, or of Chrysologus, or of Ambrose, men, who carry in the very signification of their names, and in their histories, the attributes of honey-mouthed, and golden-mouthed men, I find myself oftentimes, more affected, with the very citation, and application of some sentence of Scripture, in the midst or end of one of their sermons, than with any witty, or forcible passage of their own. And that is it, which St. Hierome doth especially magnify in St. Paul, After he had said, *Quotiescunque lego, non verba mihi videor, sed tonitrua audire*, Wheresoever I open St. Paul's epistles, it is not a word or a sentence, but a clap of thunder, that flieth out; he addeth moreover, *Legatis*, do but use yourselves to the reading of St. Paul's epistles, *Videbitis, in testimoniis quæ sumit, ex veteri Testamento, quàm artifex sit, quàm prudens*, You will easily see how artificially, how dexterously, how cunningly, and how discreetly he makes his use of those places which he citeth out of the Old Testament; *Videntur verba innocentis, et rusticani;* You would take them, saith he, sometimes for words of some plain countryman, (as some of the prophets were no other;) But before St. Paul hath done with those words, *Fulmina sunt, et capiunt omne quod tangunt*, he maketh you see, that they are flashes of lightning, and that they possess, and melt, affect and dissolve every soul they touch. And hence it is, beloved, that I return so often at home in my private meditations, that I present so often to God's people in these exercises, this consideration, that there

are not so exquisite, so elegant books in the world, as the Scriptures; neither is any one place a more pregnant example thereof, for the purity and elegancy, for the force and power, for the largeness and extension of the words, than these which the Holy Ghost hath taken in this text, *He that oppresseth the poor, reproaches his Maker, &c.* And so we pass from this first consideration, the power and elegancy of the whole word of God, in general, to the same consideration in these particular words.

The matter, which in the general is but this, that the poor must be relieved, being a doctrine obvious to all; the manner will rather be our object, at this time: how the Holy Ghost, by Solomon's hand, hath enwrapped this doctrine, in these words, how the omission of this duty is aggravated, how the performance thereof is celebrated in this text, and in the force and elegancies thereof. Man's perverseness hath changed God's method; God made man good, but in a possibility of being ill; now, God finds man ill, but in a possibility of being good. When man was good, and enabled to continue so, God began with him, with affirmative commandments; commandments that implied liberty and sovereignty; such as that, *Subjicite et dominamini*, Subdue the creature, and rule over the creature; and he comes not till after, to negative, to prohibitive commandments, commandments that imply infirmity, and servility; such as this, Of this tree thou shalt not eat, upon thy life; this life, and the next, thou shalt not. But now, because God finds man ill, and prone to be worse, God is fain to change his method, and to begin, and stop him at first with negative, and prohibitive commandments. So he does in the thirty-fourth Psalm, verse 14, (which is also again repeated) first, Depart from evil, and then, Do good[14]. For man brings with him something into the world now, to forget, and to unlearn, before he can take out any new lesson: man is so far from being good of himself, as that he must forget himself, divest himself, forsake himself, before he can be capable of any good. And such is the method of our text; because God sees a natural declination in man, to abuse his power, to the oppression of inferiors, he begins with that prohibition, Oppress not the poor; and then when he hath brought them to that moderation,

[14] 1 Peter iii. 11.

and that temper, then he carries them farther towards perfection, to an honouring of God in showing mercy to the poor.

In which method, so disposed into two parts, the fault first, and then the duty, we shall proceed by these steps; first, in the first, we shall consider the fault itself, oppression; which, in general, is an unjust damnifying of others. And secondly, the specification of the persons, the poor; for others, our superiors, we may unjustly damnify too; but that is a fault of another nature; I should rather call it envy, or emulation, or ambition, or supplantation, than oppression; and therefore that second branch will fairly admit a little disquisition, a short comparison of those two kinds of sins, Whether emulation of superiors, or oppression of inferiors, be in the nature, and root thereof, the greater sin. In which latter sin, which is properly the sin of our text, that is, oppression of the poor, we shall see, (in a third branch) the iniquity, and heinousness thereof aggravated in this, that it is said to be a reproach, a contumely; and contumely, and reproach, against whomsoever it be bent, hath always a venomous, and a mischievous nature. But much more here, where it is bent against God himself; and against God in that supreme, and primary notion, as a creator, as a maker, he reproaches the maker; but then whose maker? If I should say I cannot tell, the words themselves, and the construction thereof, in the variety of the Hebrew grammars, would justify mine ignorance, for they will not admit it to be easily determined, whether it be *factorem ejus*, or *factorem suum*, whether he that oppresses the poor, be said to reproach his maker that is made poor, or his own maker: and therefore we shall make our use of both; for both meet to aggravate the fault; if I oppress the poor, I reproach him that made that poor man, and made that man poor, and I reproach him that made me. And in these circumstances, the fault, oppression; the specification of the persons, the poor; the problem, the comparison of the two sins; the aggravation, as it is a reproach, a reproach against God, and God as a creator, as his creator, as my creator, we shall determine that first part. And when in our order thus proposed, we shall come to our second part, which is the recommendation, and celebration of the duty itself, to honour God, by showing mercy to the poor, we shall first consider the

persons, the poor; and then the act, to show mercy to the poor; and lastly the effect, and benefit thereof; for, as the omission of the duty was aggravated with that, that it was a reproaching of God, the performance thereof is exalted by this, that it is an honouring of God. After all which, we shall conclude all, with the consideration of that which is indeed the poorest of all, the sickest, and sorest, and saddest, the feeblest and faintest, the wretchedest, and miserablest thing in the world, your own souls; and lead you to see, how you do reproach God in oppressing, how you might honour God in showing mercy to those poor souls of yours. And this will be the compass, in which I shall lead your devotions for this hour; this will be the circle, which from this centre, relief of the poor, (which is the sum and resultance of the text) and by these poles, the heinousness of the fault, the happiness of the duty, I shall design unto you.

We proposed at first, to consider our two parts, the fault, and the duty, in the elegancy of the words chosen by the Holy Ghost here, according to their origination, and extraction, in the nature of the words, and their latitude and extension, in their use, in other places of Scripture. That we shall do; and in that way, our first word is oppression; *gnashak* in the original; and *gnashak*, as it does oftentimes signify *vim*, violence, and force, so does it often signify *dolum*, deceit and fraud also: so that violence and deceit concur in this oppression. And more than they. For Solomon does not depart from that which he means, when he says here, *He that oppresses the poor, reproaches his maker*, when he says in another place, *He that mocks the poor, reproaches his maker*[15]. So that now these three, violence, and deceit, and scorn are the elements, the ingredients that make up this oppression. There is not a more brutish thing than violence; amongst beasts all goes by force. There is not a more devilish thing than deceit; the serpent destroyed us all by that. But man hath raised a degree of oppression, beyond beasts, and their violence, and beyond the devil, and his falsehood, that is, scorn. For, though the devil oppress man, and hate man, he does not scorn man; he finds man a considerable enemy. For when he hath thrown a man into the world, oppressed with original sin, that

[15] Prov. xvii. 5.

man is not therefore his; the sacrament of baptism frustrates him of that title. When he hath oppressed him in the world, by actual and habitual sins, that man is not therefore his, for a worthy receiving of the body and blood of Christ Jesus frustrates him of that title. And how weak soever man be in himself, yet, *in Christo omnia possumus*, there is one man (and in that one man are all men, that is, all mankind, enwrapped) who lies open to the serpent only in his heel, and the serpent to him, in his head; and in him, *omnia possumus*, in Christ, the weakest man can do anything. The devil could oppress Job with violence: fire, and sword, and ruin upon his goods, and cattle, and servants, and children, and himself too. The devil could oppress him with deceit, corrupt the wife of his bosom, to tempt him to desperation; but he never came to scorn Job; for he saw Job did not serve God for nought; Job had good wages, and God had hedged him, enclosed him, for himself. Scorn is an affection, that implies such a height above another, as cannot be justified in any but God himself. Man can oppress by deceit; *The kings of the earth take counsel together*[16]; they study how to circumvent; and man can oppress with violence; there they break bands asunder, and cast away cords; they will be bound by no laws. But then, it is only God, who there laughs them to scorn, and hath them in derision. Now here, the oppressor practises the beast's part, he comes to violence, and the devil's part, he comes to deceit, and he usurps upon God's part, he comes to that height, as to think he may scorn and contemn. And whom? for that is our next consideration; he oppresseth the poor, he treads down the poor; him that was dust before, he treads into dirt, macerated with his own sweat, his own tears, his own blood. He oppresses him with deceit; the credulous and confident wretch, who, because he is harmless in himself, is fearless of others, he betrays, he circumvents. And he oppresses with scorn; him whom poverty hath made the subject of pity and of prayers, he makes the anvil of scorn and of jests. For, so far, our first word, *gnashak* carries his signification, and our meditation, he oppresses by violence, by deceit, by scorn, brutishly, devilishly, and more, (which is the qualification of the fault, and was our first consideration) and all

[16] Psalm ii. 2.

this upon the poor, (which is the specification of the persons, and is our second.)

You see who this oppressor is, and how you may know him; you have his marks; violence, deceit, scorn. But who is this poor man, and how shall you know him? How shall you know, whether he that asks be truly poor or no? Truly, beloved, there is scarce any one thing, in which our ignorance is more excusable than in this, to know whether he to whom we give, be truly poor, or no: in no case is our inconsideration more pardonable, than in this. God will never examine me very strictly, why I was no stricter in examining that man's condition to whom I gave mine alms. If I give to one that is poor in my sight, I shall find that alms upon God's score, amongst them, who were poor in God's sight: and my mistaking the man, shall never make God mistake my meaning. Where I find undeniable, unresistible evidence to the contrary, when I see a man able in his limbs live in continual idleness, when I see a man poor in his means, and oppressed with his charge, spend in continual drunkenness, in this case, I were the oppressor of the poor, if I should give to that man, for this were to give the children's bread to dogs. And that is not a name too bad for them; for, *foris canes*, they are dogs that are without, that is, without the church[17]: and how few of these, who make beggary an occupation from their infancy, were ever within church, how few of them ever christened, or ever married? *Foris canes*, they are dogs, that are without; and the children's bread must not be given to dogs. But to pursue our first intention, and so to find out these poor in the origination of the words chosen by the Holy Ghost here, we have in this text two words for the poor. One is Ebion; and Ebion is a beggar. It was the name given to one of those first heretics who occasioned the writing of St. John's Gospel; he was called Ebion. So that it may well be imagined, that those first heretics were mendicants: men that professed begging, and lived upon the labours, and sweat of other men. For the Ebionite is a beggar; not only he that needs, but he that declares his need, that asks, that craves, that begs: for, the root of Ebion is Ahab; which is not only to desire, but to declare that

[17] Rev. xxii. 17.

desire, to ask, to crave, to beg. Now, this poor man must be relieved. The charity that God required in Israel, was, that no man should be put to this necessity, but provided for otherwise; *There shall be no beggar amongst you*[18]; for, there is our very word, no Ebionite; that is, no poor man shall be put to beg. But yet in the prophet Jeremy[19], that man is well spoken of, that *did good even to the Ebionite*, to the beggar; he that is brought to a necessity of asking, must be relieved. Not that we are not bound to give, till another ask, or never to open our hand, till another open his mouth; for, as St. John did, in the beginning of the Revelation, a man may see a sound, see a voice. A sad aspect, a pale look, a hollow cheek, a bloodless lip, a sunk eye, a trembling hand, speak so loud, as that if I will not hear them from him, God will hear them against me. In many cases, and with many persons, it is a greater anguish to ask, than to want; and easier to starve, than to beg; therefore I must hearken after another voice, and with another organ; I must hearken with mine eye. Many times I may see need speak, when the needy man says nothing, and his case may cry aloud, when he is silent. Therefore I must lay mine ear to the ground, and hearken after them that lie in the dust, and inquire after the distresses of such men; for this is an imitation of God's preventing grace, that grace, than which we can conceive no higher thing in God himself, (*that God should be found of them, that seek him not*) if I relieve that man, that was ashamed to tell me he wanted. The Ebionite the beggar, but not he only, must be relieved: for our word, in this part of the text, is not Ebion, but a word derived from *dalal;* and *dalal*, in this word, signifies *exhaustum, attenuatum*, a man whose former estate is exhausted, and gone, or whose present labours do not prosper, but that God, for ends best known to himself, exercises him with continual poverty; the word signifies also a man enfeebled, and decrepid with age; and more than that, the word signifies sickness too: for this very word we have in Hezekiah's mouth, *The Lord will cut me off with sickness*[20]. So that now you have the specification of the person, who is the poor man, that is most properly the object of your

[18] Deut. xv. 4. [19] Jer. xxii. 16. [20] Isaiah xxxviii. 11.

charity, he whose former estate is wasted, and not by his vices, but by the hand of God, he whose present industry does not prosper, he who is overtaken with age, and so the less able to repair his wants, and in his age, afflicted with sickness, and so the less able to endure his wants. And this poor man, this labouring man, this decayed man, this aged man, this sickly man, this oppressor in our text pursues, and pursues with violence, with deceit, with scorn. And so have you the qualification of the fault, (which was our first) and the specification of the persons, which was our second consideration.

But before we depart from this branch, I remember, I asked leave at first, only to stir this consideration, only to propound this problem, only to ask this question, whether envy, and emulation, and supplantation of superiors, or this oppression, and conculcation of inferiors in this kind, were in the nature, and root thereof, the greater sin; and surely the sentence, and the judgment will be against this oppressor of the poor. For, envy, conceived against a man in place, hath evermore some emulation of those gifts, which enable a man for that place. Whosoever labours to supplant another, that he may succeed, will in some measure endeavour to be fit for that succession. So that, though it be but a squint-eye, and not a direct look, yet some eye, some aspect, the envious man hath upon virtue. Besides, he that envies a higher person, he does not practise (as the poet says) *sine talione;* he deals with a man that can be at full even with him, and can deal as ill with him. But he that oppresses the poor, digs in a dunghill for worms; and he departs from that posture, which God, in nature gave him, that is, erect, to look upward; for his eye is always down, upon them, that lie in the dust, under his feet. Certainly, he that sears up himself, and makes himself insensible of the cries, and curses of the poor here in this world, does but prepare himself for the howlings, and gnashings of teeth, in the world to come. It is the serpent's taste, the serpent's diet, *Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life;* and he feeds but on dust, that oppresses the poor. And as there is evidently, more inhumanity, more violation of nature, in this oppression, than in emulation, so may there well seem to be more impiety, and more violation of God himself, by that word, which the Holy Ghost

chooses in the next place, which is reproach, *He that oppresses the poor, reproaches his Maker.*

This word, which we translate to reproach, Theodotion translates to blaspheme: and blasphemy is an odious thing, even towards men. For men may be blasphemed. The servant of God, Moses, is blasphemed[21], as well as God: and *Goliah blasphemed the Israel of God*[22], as well as the God of Israel; and, for the most part, where we read reviling, the word is blaspheming. Our word here, (that we may still pursue our first way, a reverent consideration of the elegancy of the Scriptures, in the origination of the words) is *charak;* and this word Job uses, as it is used in our text, for reproach, *My heart shall not reproach me, so long as I live*[23]. And this, this reproaching of the heart, is, in many cases, a blaspheming, and a strange one, a self-blaspheming. When I have had, by the goodness of God's Spirit, a true sense of my sins, a true remorse, and repentance of those sins, true absolution from those sins, true seals of reconciliation after those sins, true diligence, and preclusion of occasions of relapsing into those sins, still to suspect my state in God's favour, and my full redintegration with him, still to deny myself that peace, which his Spirit, by these means, offers me, still to call my repentance imperfect, and the sacramental seals ineffectual, still to accuse myself of sins, thus divested, thus repented, this is to reproach, this is to blaspheme mine own soul. If I will say with Job, *My heart shall reproach me of nothing*, this is not, that I will accuse myself of no sin, or say, the elect of God cannot sin, no, nor that God sees not the sins of the elect, nor that God is not affected, or angry with those sins, and those sinners, as long as they remain unrepented, but after I have accused myself of those sins, and brought them into judgment, by way of confession, and received my pardon under seal, in the sacrament, and pleaded that pardon, to the church, by a subsequent amendment of life, then I reproach myself of nothing, for this were a self-blaspheming, and a reproaching of mine own soul. Now, the word of our text, in the root thereof, *charak*, is *manifestare, prostituere;* it is to publish the fault, or to prostitute the fame of any man, extraju-

[21] Acts vi. 11. [22] 1 Chron. xx. 7. [23] Job xxvii. 6.

dicially, not in a right form of judgment, and amongst those men, who are not to be his judges. So to fill itching ears with rumours, and whisperings, so to minister matter and fuel to fiery tongues, so to lay imputations, and aspersions upon men, though that which we say, of those men, be true, is a libelling, is a calumny, is a blaspheming and a reproach, in the word of this text: for it is *manifestare, prostituere*, to publish a man's faults, and to prostitute a man's fame, there, where his faults can receive no remedy, if they be true, nor his fame reparation, if they be false. It is properly, to speak ill of a man, and not before a competent judge. And in such a sense, a man may reproach God himself.

But is there then a judge between God and man? *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* is Abraham's question[24]; but there, that Judge of all the earth, is God himself. But is there a judge of heaven too? A judge between God and man, for God's proceeding there? There is. The Scripture is a judge, by which God himself will be tried. As the law is our judge, and the judge does but declare what is law, so the Scripture is our judge, and God proceeds with us according to those promises and judgments, which he hath laid down in the Scripture. When God says in Esay, *Judge between me and my vineyard*[25], certainly, God means that there is something extant, some contract, some covenant, something that hath the nature of a law, some visible, some legible thing, to judge by. And Christ tells us what that is; *Search the Scriptures*, says he; for by them we must be tried for our lives. So then, if I come to think that God will call me in question for my life, for my eternal life, by any way that hath not the nature of a law, (and, by the way, it is of the nature and essence of a law, before it come to bind, that it be published) if I think that God will condemn me, by any unrevealed will, any reserved purpose in himself, this is to reproach God, in the word of this text, for it is *prostituere*, to prostitute, to exhibit God, otherwise than he hath exhibited himself, and to charge God with a proceeding upon secret and unrevealed purposes, and not rest in his Scriptures. God will try us at last, God himself will be tried all the way, by his Scriptures; and to charge God with the damnation of men, otherwise than by his

[24] Gen. xviii. 25. [25] Isaiah v. 3.

tantummodo crede, I have commanded thee to believe, and thou hast not done that, and by his *fac hoc et vives*, I have commanded thee, to live well, and thou hast not done that, which are conditions evidently laid down in the Scriptures, and not grounded upon any secret purpose, is a reproaching of God, in the word of this text.

This, this oppressor of the poor is said to do here; he reproaches the Maker; God, in that notion, as he is the Creator. Now this is the clearest notion, and fastest apprehension, and first handle that God puts out to man, to lay hold upon him by, as he is the Creator. For though God did elect me, before he did actually create me, yet God did not mean to elect me, before he meant to create me; when his purpose was upon me, to elect me, surely his purpose had passed upon me, to create me; for when he elected me, I was I. So that this is our first notion of God towards us, as he is the Creator. The school will receive a pregnant child from his parents, and work upon him; the university will receive a grounded scholar from the school, and work upon him; the state, or the church, will receive a qualified person from the university, and work by him. But still the state, and the church, and the university, and the first school itself, had something to work upon; but God, in the creation, had nothing at all: he called us, when we were not, as though we had been. Now, here in this world, we make ourselves; that is, we make one another: kings make judges, and judges make officers: bishops make parsons, and parsons make curates: but when we consider our creation, *It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;* we did not only not do anything, but we could not do so much as wish any thing to be done, towards our creation, till we were created. In the application of that great work, the redemption of mankind, that is, in the conversion of a sinner, and the first act of that conversion, though the grace of God work all, yet there is a faculty in man, a will in man, which is in no creature but man, for that grace of God to work upon; but in the creation there was nothing at all. I honour my physician, upon the reasons that the wise man assigns; because he assists my health, and my well-being; but I honour not my physician[26] with the

[26] Ecclus. xxxviii. 7.

same honour as my Father, who gave me my very being. I honour my God in all those notions, in which he hath vouchsafed to manifest himself to me; every particular blessing of his is a remembrancer; but my creation is a holy wonder, and a mysterious amazement. And therefore, as David, the father, wraps up all stubborn ignorance of God, in that, *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God;* so Solomon, the son, wraps up all knowledge of God in that, *Remember thy Creator*[27]; still contemplate God in that notion, as he made thee of nothing, for, upon that, all his other additions depend. And when thou comest to any post-creations, any after-makings in this world, to be made rich, made wise, made great, *Praise thou the Lord, bless him, and magnify him for ever*, for those additions, and bless him for having made thee capable of those additions, by something conferred upon thee before, that he gave thee a patrimony from thy parents, and thine industry working upon that, made thee rich; that he raised thee to riches, and the eye of the state looking upon that, made thee honourable; but still return to thy first making, thy creation, as thou wast made of nothing, nothing; so low, as that not sin itself, not sin against the Holy Ghost himself can cast thee so low again; nothing can make thee nothing; nothing that thou canst do here, nothing that thou canst suffer hereafter, can reduce thee to nothing. And in this notion, this supreme, and majestical notion, does this oppressor of the poor reproach God; he reproaches the Maker. But then, whose maker? for that is also another branch, another disquisition.

Here we accept willingly, and entertain usefully their doubt, that will not resolve, whether our *Gnoshehu* in the text, be *factorem ejus*, or *factorem suum;* whether this oppressor of the poor be said here to reproach his Maker, that is made poor, or his own Maker. Let them enjoy their doubt; be it either; be it both. First, let it be the poor man's Maker, and then, does this oppressor consider, that it is God that hath made that poor man, or that hath made that man poor, and will he oppress him then? If a man of those times, had heard a song of Nero's making, and had been told that it was his, (as that emperor delighted in compo-

[27] Eccles. xii. 1.

sitions of that kind) he would not, he durst not have said, that it was a harsh, an untunable song. If a man saw a clock or a picture of his prince's making, (as some princes have delighted themselves with such manufactures) he would not, he durst not say, it was a disorderly clock, or a disproportioned picture. Wise fathers have foolish children, and beautiful, deformed; yet we do not oppress, nor despise those children, if we loved their parents; nor will we any poor man, if we truly love that God, that made him poor; and, if his poverty be not of God's making, but of the devil's, induced by his riot and wastefulness, howsoever the poverty may be the devil's, still the man is of God's making.

Probris afficit factorem ejus, He reproaches him that made that man poor, and *Probris afficit factorem suum*, He reproaches that God who made him rich, his own Maker. Now, doth he consider, that the devil hath superinduced a half-lycanthropy upon him, the devil hath made him half a wolf, so much a wolf as that he would tear all that fall into his power, and half a spider, so much a spider, as that he would entangle all that come near him, and half a viper, so much a viper, as that he would envenom all that any way provoke him. Does he consider that the devil hath made him half a wolf, half a spider, half a viper, and doth he not consider that that God that is his Maker, could have made him a whole wolf, a whole spider, a whole viper, and left him in that rank of ignoble, and contemptible, and mischievous creatures? Does he not consider, that that God that made him richer than others, can make him a prey to others, and raise up enemies, that shall bring him to confusion, though he had no other crimes, therefore, because he is so rich? God can make his very riches the occasion of his ruin here, and the occasion of his everlasting ruin hereafter, by making those riches snares and occasions of sin. God who hath made him, could have left him numade; or made him what he would; and he reproaches God, as though God could have done nothing less for him, than he hath done, nor could not undo him now. But, before we depart from this branch, consider we wherein this offender, this oppressor, sins so very heinously, as to deserve so high an increpation, as to be said to reproach, and to reproach God, and God in that supreme

notion, a Maker, his Maker, and his own Maker. If his fault be but neglecting or oppressing a poor man, why should it deserve all this? In all these respects.

First, the poor are immediately in God's protection. Rich and poor are in God's administration, in his government, in his providence; but the poor are immediately in his protection. *Tibi derelictus est pauper*, says David[28], The poor commits himself unto thee. They are orphans, wards, delivered over to his tuition, to his protection. Princes have a care of all their allies, but a more especial care of those that are in their protection. And the poor are such; and therefore God more sensible in their behalf. And so, he that oppresses the poor, reproaches God, God in his orphans.

Again, rich and poor are images, pictures of God; but, (as Clement of Alexandria says wittily and strongly) the poor is *nuda imago*, a naked picture of God, a picture without any drapery, any clothes about it. And it is a much harder thing, and there is much more art showed in making a naked picture, than in all the rich attire that can be put upon it. And howsoever the rich man, that is invested in power, and greatness, may be a better picture of God, of God considered in himself, who is all greatness, all power, yet, of God considered in Christ, (which is the contemplation that concerns us most) the poor man is the better picture, and most resembles Christ who lived in continual poverty. And so, he that oppresses the poor, reproaches God, God in his orphans, God in his picture.

St. Augustine carries this consideration farther, than that the poor is more immediately God's orphan, and more perfectly his picture, that he is more properly a member of himself, of his body. For, contemplating that head, which was not so much crowned as hedged with thorns, that head, of which, he whose it was, says, *The Son of man hath not where to lay his head*[29], St. Augustine says, *Ecce caput pauperum*, Behold that head, to which, the poor make up the body, *Ob eam tantum causam venerabiles*, says that father, Therefore venerable, therefore honourable, because they are members suitable to that head. And so, all that place, where the apostle says, *That upon those members of*

[28] Psalm x. 14.

[29] Matt. viii. 19.

the body, which we think to be less honourable, we bestow most honour[30], that father applies to the poor, that therefore most respect and honour should be given to them, because the poor are more suitable members to their head Christ Jesus, than the rich are. And so also, he that oppresses the poor, reproaches God, God in his orphans, God in his image, God in the members of his own body.

St. Chrysostom carries this consideration farther than this of St. Augustine. That whereas every creature hath *filiationem vestigii*, that because God hath imparted a being, an essence, from himself, who is the root, and the fountain of all essence, and all being, therefore every creature hath a filiation from God, and is the Son of God so, as we read in Job, God is the father of the rain; and whereas every man hath *filiationem imaginis*, as well Pagan as Christian, hath the image of God imprinted in his soul, and so hath a filiation from God, and is the son of God, as he is made in his likeness; and whereas every Christian hath *filiationem pacti*, by being taken into the covenant made by God, with the elect, and with their seed, he hath a filiation from God, and is the son of God, as he is incorporated into his Son Christ Jesus, by the seals of the Christian church; besides these filiations, of being in all creatures, of the image in all men, of the covenant in all Christians, The poor, says that father, are not only *filii* but *hæredes*, and *primogeniti*, sons and eldest sons, sons, and sons and heirs. And to that purpose he makes use of those words in St. James[31], *Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of that kingdom?* Heirs, for, *Ipsorum est*, says Christ himself, *Theirs is the kingdom of heaven*[32]; and upon those words of Christ, St. Chrysostom comments thus, *Divites ejus regnitantum habent, quantum à pauperibus, eleemosynis coemerunt*, The rich have no more of that kingdom of heaven, than they have purchased of the poor, by their alms, and other erogations to pious uses. And so he that oppresses the poor reproaches God, God in his orphans, God in his image, God in the members of his own body, God in his sons, and heirs of his kingdom.

[30] 1 Cor. xii. 23. [31] James ii. 5. [32] Matt. v. 3.

But then Christ himself carries this consideration, beyond all these resemblances, and conformities, not to a proximity only, but to an identity, The poor are He. *In as much as you did it unto these, you did it unto me;* and, *in as much as you did it not unto these, you did it not unto me*[33]. And after his ascension, and establishing in glory, still he avowed them, not only to be his, but to be He, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* The poor are He, he is the poor. And so, he that oppresseth the poor, reproaches God, God in his orphans, God in his image, God in the members of his own body, God in the heirs of his kingdom, God in himself, in his own person. And so we have done with all those pieces, which constitute our first part, the heinousness of the fault, in the elegancy of the words chosen by the Holy Ghost, in which you have seen, the fault itself, oppression, and the qualification thereof, by the marks, violence, deceit, and scorn. And then the specification of the persons, The poor, as he is the Ebionite, the very vocal beggar, and as the word is *dalal*, a decayed, an aged, a sickly man; and in that branch, you have also had that problem, Whether emulation of higher, or oppression of lower, be the greater sin: and then, the aggravation of this sin, in those weights, that it is a reproach, a reproach of God, of God s the Maker, as his Maker whom he oppresses, and as his own Maker; and lastly, in what respects especially this increpation is laid upon him. And farther we have no occasion to carry that first part, the fault.

In passing from that first part, the fault, to the duty, and the celebration thereof, in those words of choice elegancy, *He that hath mercy on the poor, honours God*, though we be to look upon the persons, the poor, and the act, showing mercy to the poor, and the benefit, honouring of God, yet, of the persons, (who are still the same poor, poor, made poor by God, rather than by themselves) more needs not be said, than hath been said already. And of the act, showing of mercy to the poor, only thus much more needs be said, that the word, in which, the Holy Ghost expresses this act here, is the very same word, in which, he expresses the free mercy of God himself, *Miserebor cujus miserebor, I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to*

[33] Matt. xxv. 40.

whom I will show mercy[34]. So that God hath made the charitable man partaker with himself, in his own greatest attribute, his power of showing mercy. And then, lest any man should think, that he had no interest in this great dignity, that God had given him no means to partake of this attribute of God, this power of showing mercy to the poor, because he had left him poor too, and given him nothing to give, the same word, which the Holy Ghost uses in this text, and in Exodus, for mercy, which is *canan*, he uses in other places, particularly in the dedication of the temple, for prayer[35]. So that he, who being destitute of other means to relieve the poor, prays for the poor, is thereby made partaker of this great attribute of God's, this power of showing mercy. He hath showed mercy to the poor, if, having nothing to give, he have given mild and comfortable words, and have prayed to his abundant, and inexhaustible God, to relieve that poor man, whom he hath not made him able to relieve.

So then, no more being needful to be said, of the persons, the poor, nor of the act, showing of mercy to the poor, there remains no more in this last part, but according to our way, all the way, to consider the origination and latitude of this last word, *cabad*, this honouring of God. The word does properly signify, *augere, ampliare*, to enlarge God, to amplify, to dilate God; to make infinite God, Shall I dare to say, more God? Certainly, God to more, than he was before. O who can express this abundant, this superabundant largeness of God's goodness to man, that there is a power put into man's hands, to enlarge God, to dilate, to propagate, to amplify God himself! *I will multiply this people*, says God, *and they shall not be few, I will glorify them, and they shall not be small*[36]; there is the word of our text. God enables me to gloirfy him, to amplify him, to increase him, by my mercy, my alms. For this is not only that increase, that St. Hierome intends, that he that hath pity on the poor, *Fœneratur Domino, He lends upon use to the Lord*[37], for, this, though it be an increase, is but an increase to himself; but he that shows mercy to the poor, increases God, says our text, dilates, enlarges God. How? *Corpus aptasti miki;* When Christ comes into the world, (says

[34] Exod. xxxiii. 19. [35] 1 Kings viii.
[36] Jer. xxx. 19. [37] Prov. xix. 17.

St. Paul) he says to his Father, *Thou hast prepared and fitted a body for me*[38]. That was his natural body, that body which he assumed in the bowels of the blessed Virgin. They that pretend to enlarge this body by multiplication, by making millions of these bodies in the sacraments, by the way of transubstantiation, they do not honour this body, whose honour is to sit in the same dimensions, and circumscriptions, at the right hand of God. But then, as at his coming into this world, God had fitted him a body, so in the world, he had fitted himself another body, a mystical body, a church purchased with his blood. Now this body, this mystical body I feed, I enlarge, I dilate, and amplify, by my mercy, and my charity. For, as God says to Jerusalem[39], Thou wast in thy blood, thou wast not salted, nor swaddled, no eye pitied thee, but thou wast cast out into the open field, and I loved thee, I washed thee, I apparalled and adorned thee, *et prosperata es in regnum*, I never gave thee over, till I saw thee an established kingdom: so may all those saints of God say to God himself, to the Son of God invested in this body, this mystical body, the church, thou wast cast out into the open field, all the world persecuted thee, and then we gave thee suck with our blood, we clothed thee with our bodies, we built thee houses and adorned and endowed those houses to thine honour, *et prosperatus es in regnum*, we never gave over spending, and doing, and suffering for thy glory, till thou hadst an established kingdom, over all the earth. And so thou, thy body, thy mystical body, the church, is honoured, that is, amplified, dilated, enlarged, by our mercy. *Magnificat anima mea Dominum*, was the exultation of the blessed Virgin; *My soul doth magnify the Lord.* When the meditations of my heart, digested into writing, or preaching, or any other declaration of God's glory, carry, or advance the knowledge of God, in other men, then *my soul doth magnify the Lord*, enlarge, dilate, amplify God. But when I relieve any poor wretch, of the household of the faithful, with mine alms, then my mercy magnifies the Lord, occasions him that receives, to magnify the Lord by this thanksgiving, and them that see it to magnify the Lord by their imitation, in the like works of mercy. And so far, do these two elegant words chosen here by the Holy Ghost, carry our meditation: in

[38] Heb. x. 5. [39] Ezek. xvi. 1.

the first, *canan*, God makes the charitable man partaker of his own highest power, mercy; and in the other *cabad*, God enables us, by this mercy, to honour him so far, as to dilate, to enlarge, to amplify him, that is that body, which he in his Son, hath invested by purchase, his church.

We have done; if you will but clasp up all this in your own bosoms, if you will but lay it to your own hearts, you may go. A poorer thing is not in the world, nor a sicker, (which you may remember to have been one signification of this word poor) than thine own soul. And therefore the Chaldee paraphrase renders this text thus, *He that oppresses the poor reproaches his own soul;* for, his own soul is as poor, as any whom he can oppress. To a beggar, that needs, and asks but bodily things, thou wilt say, Alas poor soul; and wilt thou never say Alas poor soul to thyself, that needest spiritual things? If thy affections, thy pleasures, thy delights, beg of thee, and importune thee so far, to bestow upon them, say unto them, I have those that are nearer me than you, wife and children, and I must not impoverish them, to give unto you, I must not starve my family, to feed my pleasures. But if this wife and children beg, and importune so far, say unto them too, I have one that is nearer me, than all you, a soul; and I must not endanger that, to satisfy you, I must not provide jointures, and portions with the damnifying, with the damning of mine own soul. It is a miserable alchemy and extracting of spirits, that stills away the spirit, the soul itself; and a poor philosopher's stone, that is made with the coals of hell-fire; a lamentable purchase, when the soul is paid for the land. And therefore show mercy to this soul. Do not oppress this soul; not by violence, which was the first signification of this word oppression: do not violate, do not smother, not strangle, not suffocate the good motions of God's Spirit in thee; for, it is but a woful victory, to triumph over thine own conscience, and but a servile greatness to be able to silence that. Oppress not thy soul by fraud, which was the second signification of this word oppression. Defraud not thy soul of the benefit of God's ordinances; frequent these exercises; come hither; and be not here like Gideon's fleece, dry when all about it was wet; parched in a remorselessness when all the congregation about thee is melted into holy

tears; be not as Gideon's fleece dry, when all else is wet, nor as that fleece, wet when all about it was dry: be not jealous of God; stand not here as a person unconcerned, disinterested; as though those gracious promises, which God is pleased to shed down upon the whole congregation, from this place, appertained not to thee, but that all those judgments denounced here, over which, they that stand by thee, are able, by a faithful and cheerful laying hold of God's offers, though they stand guilty of the same sins that thou dost, to lift up their heads, must still necessarily overflow and surround thee. Oppress not that soul, by violence, by fraud, nor by scorn, which was the other signification of this word oppression. *Hoc nos perdit, quod divina quoque eloquia in facetias, in dicteria vertamus*[40]. Damnation is a serious thing, and this aggravates it, that we slight and make jests at that which should save us, the Scriptures, and the ordinances of God. For by this oppression of thy poor soul, by this violence, this fraud, this scorn, thou wilt come to reproach thy Maker, to impute that loss of thy soul, which thou hast incurred by often breach of laws evidently manifested to thee, to his secret purpose, and unrevealed will; than which, thou canst not put a greater reproach, a greater contumely, a greater blasphemy upon God. For, God cannot be God, if he be not innocent, nor innocent if he draw blood of me, for his own act. But if thou show mercy to this soul, mercy in that signification of the word, as it denotes an actual performance of those things that are necessary for the making sure of thy salvation, or, if thou canst not yet attain to those degress of sanctification, mercy in that signification of the word, as the word denotes hearty and earnest prayer, that thou couldest, *Lord I believe, Lord help mine unbelief*, Lord I stand yet, yet Lord raise me when I fall, *Honorabis Deum*, thou shalt honour God, in the sense of the word in this text, thou shalt enlarge God, amplify, dilate God, that is, the body of God, the church, both here, and hereafter. For, thou shalt add a figure to the number of his saints, and there shall be a saint the more for thee; thou shalt add a theme of joy, to the exultation of the angels; they shall have one occasion of rejoicing the more from thee: thou shalt add a pause, a stop to that *usquequo* of the

[40] Chrysostom.

martyrs, under the altar, who solicit God for the resurrection, for, thou shalt add a step to the resurrection itself, by having brought it so much nearer, as to have done thy part for the filling up of the number of the saints, upon which fulness the resurrection shall follow. And thou shalt add a voice, to that old, and ever-new song, that catholic hymn, in which, both churches, Militant and Triumphant, shall join, *Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him, that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever, and ever*[41]. Amen.

SERMON CXXIV.

A SERMON UPON THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER, 1622, BEING THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF OUR DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWDER TREASON.

INTENDED FOR PAUL'S CROSS, BUT, BY REASON OF THE WEATHER, PREACHED IN THE CHURCH.

LAMENTATIONS iv. 20.

The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits.

THE PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

O LORD open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise; for thou, O Lord, didst make haste to help us, Thou, O Lord, didst make speed to save us. Thou that sittest in heaven, didst not only look down, to see what was done upon the earth, but what was done in the earth; and when the bowels of the earth were, with a key of fire, ready to open and swallow us, the bowels of thy compassion were, with a key of love, opened to succour us; this is the day, and these are the hours, wherein that should have been acted: in this our day, and in these hours, we praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee, to be the Lord; all

[41] Rev. v. 13.

our earth doth worship thee; the holy church throughout all this land, doth acknowledge thee, with commemorations of that great mercy, now in these hours. Now, in these hours, it is thus commemorated, in the king's house, where the head and members praise thee; thus, in that place, where it should have been perpetrated, where the reverend judges of the land do now praise thee; thus, in the universities, where the tender youth of this land, is brought up to praise thee, in a detestation of their doctrines, that plotted this; thus it is commemorated in many several societies, in many several parishes, and thus, here, in this mother church, in this great congregation of thy children, where, all, of all sorts, from the lieutenant of thy lieutenant, to the meanest son of thy son, in this assembly, come with hearts, and lips, full of thanksgiving: thou Lord, openest their lips, that their mouth may show forth thy praise, for thou, O Lord, didst make haste to help them, thou didst make speed to save them. Accept, O Lord, this sacrifice, to which thy Spirit giveth fire; this of praise, for thy great mercies already afforded to us, and this of prayer, for the continuance and enlargement of them, upon the Catholic church, by them, who pretend themselves the only sons thereof; dishonoured this day; upon these churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland, shaked and threatened dangerously this day; upon thy servant, our sovereign, for his defence of the true faith, designed to ruin this day; upon the prince, and others derived from the same root, some but infants, some not yet infants, enwrapped in dust, and annihilation, this day; upon all the deliberations of the counsel, that in all their consultations, they may have before their eyes, the record and registers of this day; upon all the clergy, that all their preaching, and their government, may preclude, in their several jurisdictions, all re-entrances of that religion, which, by the confession of the actors themselves, was the only ground of the treason of this day; upon the whole nobility, and commons, all involved in one common destruction, this day; upon both our universities, which though they lack no arguments out of thy word, against the enemies of thy truth, shall never leave out this argument out of thy works, the history of this day; and upon all those, who are any ways afflicted, that our afflictions be not multiplied upon us,

by seeing them multiplied amongst us, who would have diminished thee, and annihilated us, this day; and lastly, upon this auditory assembled here, that till they turn to ashes in the grave, they may remember, that thou tookest them, as fire-brands out of the fire, this day.

Hear us, O Lord, and hearken to us, receive our prayers, and return them with effect, for his sake, in whose name and words, we make them:

Our Father which art, &c.

THE SERMON.

OF the author of this book, I think there was never doubt made; but yet, that is scarce safely done, which the Council of Trent doth, in that canon, which numbers the books of canonical Scriptures, to leave out this book of Lamentations. For, though I make no doubt, but that they had a purpose to comprehend, and involve it, in the name of Jeremy, yet that was not enough; for so they might have comprehended and involved, Genesis, and Deuteronomy, and all between those two, in one name of Moses; and so they might have comprehended, and involved, the Apocalypse, and some epistles in the name of John, and have left out the book itself in the number. But one of their own Jesuits[1], though some, (whom in that canon they seem to follow) make this book of Lamentations, but an appendix to the prophecy of Jeremy, determines, for all that canon, that it is a distinct book. Indeed, if it were not, the first chapter would have been called, the fifty-third of Jeremy, and not the first of the Lamentations. But that which gives most assuredness, is, that in divers Hebrew Bibles, it is placed otherwise, than we place it, and not presently, and immediately after the prophecy of Jeremy, but discontinued from him, though he were never doubted to be the author thereof.

The book is certainly the prophet Jeremy's, and certainly a distinct book; but whether the book be a history, or a prophecy, whether Jeremy lament that which he had seen, or that which

[1] Castro.

he foresees, calamities past, or future calamities, things done, or things to be done, is a question which hath exercised, and busied divers expositors. But, as we say of the parable of Dives, and Lazarus, that it is a historical parable, and a parabolical history, some such persons there were, and some such things were really done, but some other things were figuratively, symbolically, parabolically added: so we say of Jeremy's Lamentations. It is a prophetical history, and a historical prophecy; some of the sad occasions of these lamentations were passed, when he writ, and some were to come after: for, we may not despise the testimony of the Chaldee paraphrasts, who were the first that illustrated the Bible, in that nation, nor of St. Hierome, who was much conversant with the Bible, and with that nation, nor of Josephus, who had justly so much estimation in that nation, nor of those later rabbins, who were the learnedest of that nation; who are all of opinion, that Jeremy writ these Lamentations, after he saw some declinations in that state, in the death of Josiah, and so the book is historical, but when he only foresaw their transportation into Babylon, before that calamity fell upon them, and so it is prophetical. Or, if we take the expositions of the others, that the whole book was written after their transportation into Babylon, and to be, in all parts, historical, yet it is prophetical still; for the prophet laments a greater desolation than that, in the utter ruin, and devastation of the city, and nation, which was to fall upon them, after the death of Christ Jesus. Neither is any piece of this book, the less fit to be our text, this day, because it is both historical, and prophetical, for, they, from whom, God, in his mercy, gave us a deliverance, this day, are our historical enemies, and our prophetical enemies; historically we know, they have attempted our ruin heretofore, and prophetically we may be sure, they will do so again, whensoever any new occasion provokes them, or sufficient power enables them.

The text then is as the book presented to Ezekiel; in it are written lamentations, and mournings, and woe[a]; and all they are written within, and without, says the text there; within, as they concern the Jews, without, as they are appliable to us: and they concern the Jews, historically (attempts upon that state Jeremy

[a] Ezek. ii. 20.

had certainly seen,) and they concern them prophetically, for farther attempts Jeremy did certainly foresee. They are appliable to us both ways too: historically, because we have seen, what they would have done, and prophetically, because we foresee what they would do. So that here is but a difference of the computation; here is *stilo veteri*, and *stilo novo;* here is the Jew's calendar, and the papist's calendar; in the Jew's calendar, one Babylon wrought upon the people of God, and in the papist's calendar, another Babylon: *stilo veteri*, in the Jew's calendar, seven hundred years before Christ came, there were pits made, and the breath of their nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits: *stilo novo*, in the papist's calendar, sixteen hundred years after Christ came in all fulness, in all clearness, there were pits made again, and the breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was almost taken in those pits.

It is then Jeremy's, and it is a distinct book; it concerns the Jews, and it concerns us too; and it concerns us both, both ways, historically, and prophetically. But whether Jeremy lament here the death of a good king, of Josiah, (for so St. Hierome, and many of the ancients, and many of the Jews themselves take it, and think that those words in the Chronicles[3], have relation to these Lamentations, *And Jeremy lamented for Josiah, and all the people speak of him, in their lamentations,*) or whether he lament the transportation and the misery of an ill king, of Zedekiah, (as is more ordinarily, and more probably held by the expositors) we argue not, we dispute not now; we embrace that which arises from both, that both good kings, and bad kings, Josiah, and Zedekiah, are the anointed of the Lord, and the breath of the nostrils, that is, the life of the people; and therefore both to be lamented, when they fall into dangers, and consequently both to be preserved by all means, by prayer from them who are private persons, by counsel from them, who have that great honour and that great charge, to be near them in that kind, and by support and supply, from all, of all sorts, from falling into such dangers.

These considerations will, I think, have the better impression in you, if we proceed in the handling of them thus: first, the main cause of the lamentation was the ruin, or the dangerous

[3] 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

declination of the kingdom of that great and glorious state, the kingdom; but then they did not seditiously sever the king, and the kingdom, as though the kingdom could do well, and the king ill, that safe, and he in danger, for they see cause to lament, because misery was fallen upon the person of the king; perchance upon Josiah, a good, a religious king; perchance but upon Zedekiah, a worse king; yet, whichsover it be, they acknowledge him to be *Unctus Domini, the anointed of the Lord*, and to be *Spiritus narium, The breath of their nostrils:* when this person therefore, was fallen into the pits of the enemy, the subject laments; but this lamenting because he was fallen, implies a deliverance, a restitution, he was fallen, but he did not lie there: so the text, which is as yet but of lamentation, will grow an hour hence to be of congratulation; and then we shall see, that whosoever, in rectified affections, hath lamented a danger, and then congratulated a deliverance, he will provide against a relapse, a falling again into that or any other danger, by all means of sustaining the kingdom and the king, in safety and in honour.

Our first step then in this royal progress, is, that the cause of this lamentation, was, the declination, the diminution of the kingdom. If the centre of the world should be moved but one inch out of the place, it cannot be reckoned how many miles, this island, or any building in it, would be thrown out of their places; a declination in the kingdom of the Jews, in the body of the kingdom, in the soul of the state, in the form of government, was such an earthquake, as could leave nothing standing. Of all things that are, there was an idea in God; there was a model, a platform, an exemplar of everything, which God produced and created in time, in the mind and purpose of God before: of all things God had an idea, a preconception; but of monarchy, of kingdom, God, who is but one, is the idea; God himself, in his unity, is the model, he is the type of monarchy. He made but one world; for, this, and the next, are not two worlds; this is but the morning, and that the everlasting noon, of one and the same day, which shall have no night: they are not two houses; this is the gallery, and that the bedchamber of one, and the same palace, which shall feel no ruin. He made this one world, but one eye, the sun; the moon is not another eye, but a glass, upon

which, the sun reflects. He made this one world, but one ear, the church; he tells not us, that he hears by a left ear, by saints, but by that right ear, the church he doth. There is one God, one faith, one baptism, and these lead us to the love of one sovereign, of monarchy, of kingdom. In that name, God hath conveyed to us the state of grace, and the state of glory too; and he hath promised both, in enjoining that petition, *Adveniat regnum, Thy kingdom come*, thy kingdom of grace here, thy kingdom of glory hereafter. All forms of government have one and the same soul, that is, sovereignty; that resides somewhere in every form; and this sovereignty is in them all, from one and the same root, from the Lord of lords, from God himself, for all power is of God: but yet this form of a monarchy, of a kingdom, is a more lively, and a more masculine organ, and instrument of this soul of sovereignty, than the other forms are: we are sure women have souls as well as men, but yet it is not so expressed, that God breathed a soul into woman, as he did into man; all forms of government have this soul, but yet God infuseth it more manifestly, and more effectually, in that form, in a kingdom: all places are alike near to heaven, yet Christ would take a hill, for his ascension; all governments may justly represent God to me, who is the God of order, and fountain of all government, but yet I am more eased, and more accustomed to the contemplation of heaven, in that notion, as heaven is a kingdom, by having been born, and bred in a monarchy: God is a type of that, and that is a type of heaven.

This form then, in nature the noblest, in use the profitablest of all others, God always intended to his best beloved people, God always meant that the Jews should have a king, though he prepared them in other forms before; as he meant them peace at last, though he exercised them in war, and meant them the land of promise, though he led them through the wilderness; so he meant them a king, though he prepared them by judges. God intended it in himself, and he declared it to them, four hundred years before he gave them a king, he instructed them, what kind of king they should set over them[4], when they came to that kind of government: and long before that he made

[4] Deut. xvii. 14.

a promise, by Jacob to Judah of a kingdom, and *that the sceptre should not depart from him, till Shiloh came*[5]. And when God came near the time, in which he intended to them that government, in the time of Samuel, who was the immediate predecessor to their first king, Saul, God made way for a monarchy, for Samuel had a much more absolute authority, in that state, than any of the judges had; Samuel judged them, and in their petition for a king, they ask but that, *Make us a king to judge us*[6]; Samuel was little less than a king; and Saul's reign, and his, are reckoned both in one number, and made as the reign of one man; when it is said in the Acts, that Saul reigned forty years[7], Samuel's time is included in that number, for all the years, from the death of Eli, to the beginning of David, are but forty years. God meant them a kingdom in himself, promised them a kingdom in Judah, made laws for their kingdom in Deuteronomy, made way for the kingdom in Samuel, and why then was God displeased with their petition for a kingdom?

It was a greater fault in them, than it could have been in any other people, to ask a king; not that it was not the most desirable form of government, but that God governed them, so immediately, so presentially himself, as that it was an ingrateful intemperance in them, to turn upon any other means; God had ever performed that which he promised them, in that which comprehended all, *Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people*[8]; and therefore Josephus hath expressed it well; all other people are under the form of democraty, or aristocraty, or such other forms, composed of men; *Sed noster legislator, theocratiam instituit*, The Jews were only under a theocraty, an immediate government of God, he judged them himself, and he himself fought their battles: and therefore God says to Samuel, *They have not rejected thee*, thou wast not king, *but they have rejected Me*, I was. To be weary of God, is it enough to call it a levity? But if they did only compare form with form, and not God himself with any form, if they did only think monarchy best, and believe that God intended a monarchy to them, yet to limit God his time, and to make God perform his promise before his day,

[5] Gen. xlix. 10. [6] 1 Sam. viii. 5.
[7] Acts xiii. 21. [8] Exod. xix. 5.

was a fault, and inexcusable. Daniel saw, that the Messiah should come within seventy week: Daniel did not say, Lord, let it be within fifty weeks, or let it be this week: the martyrs under the altar, cry *Usquequo Domine*, *How long Lord*, but then, they leave it there, even as long as pleaseth thee: their petition should have been, *Adveniat regnum tuum*, Let us have that kingdom, which because thou knowest it is good for us, thou hast promised to us; but yet *Fiat voluntas tua*, Let us have it then, when thy wisdom sees it best for us: you said to me (says Samuel, by way of reproof and increpation) you said, *Nay, but a king shall reign over us*[9]; now, that was not their fault; but that which follows, the unseasonableness and inconsideration of their clamorous petition, *You said a king shall reign over us, when the Lord your God was your king;* they would not trust God's means, there was their first fault: and then, though they desired a thing good in itself, and a good intended to them, yet they fixed God his time, and they would not stay his leisure; and either of these, to ask other things than God would give, or at other times, than God would give them, is displeasing to him: use his means, and stay his leisure.

But yet, though God were displeased with them, he executed his own purpose; he was angry with their manner of asking a king, but yet he gave them a king: howsoever God be displeased with them, who prevaricate in his cause, who should sustain it, and do not, God's cause shall be sustained, though they do it not. We may distinguish the period of the Jewish state well enough, thus, that they had *infantiam*, or *pueritiam*, their infancy, their minority, in Adam, and the first patriarchs till the flood: that they had *adolescentiam*, a growing time, from Noah, through the other patriarchs, till Moses: and that they had *juventutem*, a youth and strength from Moses, through the judges, to Saul: but then they had *virilitatem*, *virilem ætatem*, their established vigour, under their kings; and after them, they fell *in senectutem*, into a wretched and miserable decay of old age, and decrepitness: their kingdom was their best state; and so much, God in the prophet, intimates pregnantly, when refreshing to their memories, in a particular inventory, and catalogue, all his former benefits to

[9] 1 Sam. xii. 12.

them, how he clothed Jerusalem, how he fed her, how he adorned her, he summed up all, in this one, *Et profecisti in regnum, I have advanced thee, to be a kingdom*[10]: there was the tropic, there was the solstice, farther than that, in this world, we know not how God could go; a kingdom was really the best state upon earth, and symbolically, the best figure, and type of heaven. And therefore, when the prophet Jeremy, historically beheld the declination of this kingdom, in the death of Josiah, and prophetically foresaw the ruins thereof, in the transportation of Zedekiah, or, if he had seen that historically too, yet prophetically he foresaw the utter devastation, and depopulation, and extermination, which scattered that nation, soon after Christ, to this day, (and God and no man knows, for how long,) when they, who were a kingdom, are now nowhere a village, and they who had such kings, have now nowhere a constable of their own, historically, prophetically, Jeremy had just cause of lamentation for the danger of that kingdom.

We had so also, for this our kingdom, this day; God hath given us a kingdom, not as other kingdoms, made up of divers cities, but of divers kingdoms, and all those kingdoms were destined to desolation, in one minute. It was not only the destruction of the persons present, but of the kingdom, for to submit the kingdom to the government of a foreign prelate, was to destroy the monarchy, to annihilate the supremacy, to ruin the very form of a kingdom; a kingdom under another head, besides the king, is not a kingdom, as ours is. The oath that the emperor takes to the pope, is by their authors called *Juramentum Fidelitatis*, an Oath of Allegiance; and if they had brought our kings, to take an oath of allegiance so, this were no kingdom. Pope Nicholas the Second, went about to create two kingdoms, that of Tuscany, and that of Lombardy; his successors have gone about to destroy more; for to make it depend upon him, were to destroy our kingdom. That they have attempted historically; and as long as these axioms, and aphorisms remain in their authors, that one shall say, that *de jure*, by right all Christian kingdoms do hold of the pope, and *de facto*, are forfeited to the pope, and another shall say, that Christendom would

[10] Ezek. xvi. 3.

be better governed if the pope would take the forfeiture, and so bring all these royal farms, into his own demesne, we see also, their prophetical desire, their prophetical intention, against this kingdom, what they would do: in their actions we have their history, in their axioms we have their prophecy.

Jeremy lamented the desolation of the kingdom, but that, expressed in the death, and destruction of the king. He did not divide the king and the kingdom, as if the kingdom could do well, and the king in distress: *Omnipotentia Dei, asylum hæreticorum;* It is well said, by more than one of the ancients, that the omnipotence of God, is the sanctuary of heretics: when they would establish any heresy, they fly to God's almightiness, God can do all, therefore he can do this. So, in the Roman church, they establish their heresy of transubstantiation; and so, their deliverance of souls not from purgatory only, but from hell itself. They think to stop all mouths with that, God can do it, no man dares deny that; when as, if that were granted, (which, in such things, as naturally imply contradiction in themselves, or contradiction to God's word, cannot be granted, for God cannot do that, God cannot lie,) yet though God can do it, concludes not that God will do it, or hath done it: *Omnipotentia Dei asylum hæreticorum*, The omnipotency of God, is the sanctuary of heretics, and so, *salus regni*, is *asylum proditorum*, greater treasons, and seditions, and rebellions have never been set on foot, than upon colour, and pretence, of a care of the state, and of the good of the kingdom. Everywhere, the king is *sponsus regni*, the husband of the kingdom; and to make love to the king's wife, and undervalue him, must necessarily make any king jealous: the king is *anima regni*, the soul of the kingdom; and to provide for the health of the body, with the detriment of the soul, is perverse physic; the king is *caput regni*, the head of the kingdom; and to cure a member, by cutting off the head, is ill surgery: man and wife, soul and body, head and members, God hath joined, and those whom God hath joined, let no man sever. *Salus regni, asylum proditorum*, To pretend to uphold the kingdom, and overthrow the king, hath ever been the temptation before, and the excuse after, in the greatest treasons. In that action of the Jews, which we insisted upon before, in their

pressing for a king, *The elders of Israel were gathered together*[11], and so far they were in their way, for this was no popular, no seditious assembly of light and turbulent men, but the elders; and then, they came to Samuel, and so far they were in their right way too, for they held no councils apart, but came to the right place, for redress of grievances, to their then highest governor, to Samuel: when they were thus lawfully met, they forbear not to lay open unto him, the injustice of his greatest officers, though it concerned the very sons of Samuel; and thus far they kept within their convenient limits; but when they would press Samuel to a new way of remedy, to an inconvenient way, to a present way, to their own way, and refer nothing to him, what care soever they pretended of the good of the state, it is evident, that they had no good opinion of Samuel himself, and even that displeased God, that they were ill affected to that person, whom he had set over them. To sever the king, and the kingdom, and pretend the weal of the one, without the other, is to shake and discompose God's building.

Historically this was the Jews' case, when Jeremy lamented here, if he lamented the declination of the state, in the death of the king Josiah, and if he lamented the transportation of Zedekiah, and that that cross were not yet come upon them; or if he lamented the future devastation of that nation, occasioned by the death of the King of kings Christ Jesus, when he came into the world, this was their case prophetically: either way, historically, or prophetically, Jeremy looks upon the kingdom, but yet through that glass, through the king.

The duty of the day, and the order of the text, invites us to an application of this branch too. Our adversaries did not come to say to themselves, *Nolumus regnum hoc*[12], We will not have this kingdom stand, the material kingdom, the plenty of the land, they would have been content to have, but the formal kingdom, that is, this form of government, by a sovereign king, that depends upon none but God, they would not have. So that they came implicitly to *Nolumus regnum hoc*, We will not have this kingdom governed thus, and they came explicitly to a *Nolumus regem hunc* (as the Jews were resolved of Christ), We will not

[11] 1 Sam. viii. 4. [12] Luke xiv. 14.

have this king to govern at all. *Non hunc?* Will you not have him? You were at your *nolumus hanc* long before; her, whom God had set over you, before him, you would not have. Your, not anniversary, but hebdomadary treasons, cast upon her a necessity of drawing blood often, and so your *nolumus hanc*, your desire that she were gone, might have some kind of ground, or colour: but for your *nolumus hunc*, for this king who had made no inquisition for blood, who had forborne your very pecuniary penalties, who had (as himself witnesses of himself) made you partakers with his subjects of his own religion, in matters of grace, and in real benefits, and in titles of honour, *Quare fremuerunt*, Why did these men rage, and imagine a vain thing[18]? What they did historically, we know; they made that house, which is the hive of the kingdom, from whence all her honey comes; that house where Justice herself is conceived, in their preparing of laws, and inanimated, and quickened and borne by the royal assent, there given; they made that whole house one murdering piece, and charged that piece with peers, with people, with princes, with the king, and meant to discharge it upward at the face of heaven, to shoot God at the face of God, him, of whom God hath said, *Dii estis*, You are gods, at the face of God, that had said so, as though they would have reproached the God of heaven, and not have been beholden to him for such a king, but shoot him up to him, and bid him take his king again, with a *nolumus hunc regnare*, we will not have this king to reign over us. This was our case historically, and what it is prophetically, as long as that remains to be their doctrine, which he, against whom that attempt was principally made, found by their examination, to be their doctrine, that they, and no sect in the world, but they, did make treason an article of religion, that their religion bound them to those attempts, so long they are never at an end; till they disavow those doctrines, that conduce to that, prophetically they wish, prophetically they hope for better success in as ill attempts.

It is then the kingdom that Jeremy laments; but his nearest object is the king; he laments him. First, let it be, (as with St. Hierome, many of the ancients, and with them, many of the

[18] Psalm ii. 1.

latter rabbins will have it) for Josiah, for a good king, in whose death, the honour, and the strength of the kingdom took that deadly wound, to become tributary to a foreign prince: for, to this lamentation they refer those words of the prophet, which describe a great sorrow, *In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon, in the valley of Megiddon*[14]; which was the place, where Josiah was slain; there shall be such a lamentation (says the prophet, in this interpretation) as was for the death of Josiah. This then was for him; for a good king. Wherein have we his goodness expressed? Abundantly. *He did that which was right in God's sight*[15]; (And whose eye need he fear, that is right in the eye of God?) But how long did he so? To the end; for, Nero, who had his *quinquennium*, and was a good emperor for his first five years, was one of the worst of all: he that is ill all the way, is but a tyrant, he that is good at first, and after ill, an angel's face, and a serpent's tail make him a monster; Josiah began well, and persevered so, He turned not aside to the right hand, nor to the left; that is, (if we apply it to the Josiah of our times) neither to the fugitive, that leaves our church, and goes to the Roman, nor to the separatist, that leaves our church, and goes to none. In the eighteenth year of his reign, Josiah undertook the reparation of God's house; if we apply this to the Josiah of our times, I think, in that year of his reign, he visited this church, and these walls, and meditated, and persuaded the reparation thereof. In one word, *Like unto Josiah, there was no king before, nor after*[16]. And therefore there was just cause of lamentation for this king, for Josiah; historically for the very loss of his person, prophetically for the misery of the state, after his death.

Our errand is to-day, to apply all these branches to the day; those men who intended us, this cause of lamentation this day, in the destruction of our Josiah, spared him not, because he was so, because he was a Josiah, because he was good; no, not because he was good to them, his benefits to them, had not mollified them, towards him: for that is not their way; both the French Henrys were their own, and good to them; but did that rescue either of them from the knife? And was not that

[14] Zech. xii. 11. [15] 2 Kings xxii. 2. [16] 2 Kings xxiii. 25.

emperor whom they poisoned in the sacrament, their own, and good to them? and yet was that, any antidote against their poison? To so reprobate a sense hath God given them over herein, as that, though in their books, they lie heaviest upon princes of our religion, yet truly they have destroyed more of their own, than of ours. Thus it is historically in their proceedings past: and prophetically it can be but thus, since no king is good, in their sense, if he agree not to all points of doctrine with them: and when that is done, not good yet, except he agree in all points of jurisdiction too; and that, no king can do, that will not be their farmer of his kingdom. Their authors have disputed *auferibilitatem papæ*, whether the church of God might not be without a pope, they have made a problematical, a disputable matter, and some of their authors have diverted towards an affirmation of it; but *auferibilitas potestatis*, to imagine a king without kingly sovereignty, never came into problem, into disputation. We all lamented, and bitterly, and justly, the loss of our Deborah, though then we saw a Josiah succeeding: but if they had removed our Josiah, and his royal children, and so, this form of government, where, or who, or what had been an object of consolation to us?

The cause of lamentation in the loss of a good king, is certainly great, and so it was, if Jeremy lamented Josiah; but if it were but for Zedekiah, an ill king, (as the greater part of expositors take it) yet the lamentation you see, is the same. How ill a king was Zedekiah? As ill, as Josiah was good, that is his measure. *He did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done*[17]; here is his sin, sin by precedent; and what had Jehoiakim done? *He had done evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done*[18]. It is a great, and dangerous wickedness, which is done upon pretext of antiquity; the religion of our fathers, the church of our fathers, the worship of our fathers, is a pretext that colours a great deal of superstition. He did evil, as his fathers; there was his comparative evil: and his positive evil, (I mean, his particular sin) was, *That he humbled not himself to God's prophets*[19], to Jeremy speaking from the mouth of the Lord; there was irreligiousness;

[17] 2 Kings xxiv. 19. [18] 2 Kings xxv. ult. [19] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12.

and then, He broke the oath which he had sworn by God, there was perfidiousness, faithlessness; and lastly, He stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart, from turning to the Lord of Israel, there was impenitibleness: thus evil was Zedekiah, irreligious to God, treacherous to man, impenitible to himself, and yet the state, and men truly religious in the state, the prophet lamented him; not his spiritual defections, by sin; for, they did not make themselves judges of that; but they lamented the calamities of the kingdom, in the loss even of an evil king.

That man must have a large comprehension, that shall adventure to say of any king, He is an ill king; he must know his office well, and his actions well, and the actions of other princes too, who have correspondence with him, before he can say so. When Christ says, *Let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than this*[20], (that is, when it comes to swearing) *that cometh of evil*, St. Augustine does not understand that, of the evil disposition of that man that swears, but of them, who will not believe him, without swearing; many times a prince departs from the exact rule of his duty, not out of his own indisposition to truth, and clearness, but to countermine underminers. That which David says in the eighteenth Psalm[21], David speaks, not of man, but of God himself: *Cum perverso perverteris*, With the froward, thou wilt show thyself froward; God, who is of no froward nature, may be made froward; with crafty neighbours, a prince will be crafty, and perchance false with the false. Alas, (to look into no other profession but our own) how often do we excuse dispensations, and pluralities, and non-residences, with an *omnes faciunt*, I do, but as other men of my profession, do? Allow a king but that, that he does but as other kings do, nay, but this, he does but as other kings put him to a necessity to do, and you will not hastily call a king an ill king. When God gives his people for old shoes, and sells them for nothing, and, at the same time, gives his and their enemies abundance, when God commands Abraham, to sacrifice his own and only son, and his enemies have children at their pleasure, as David speaks, to give yourselves the liberty of human affection, you would think God an ill God; but yet, for all this, his children are to him, a royal

[20] Matt. v. 37. [21] Verse 26.

priesthood, and a holy nation; and all their tears are in his bottles, and registered in his book, for all this. When princes pretermit in some things, the present benefit of their subjects, and confer favours upon others, give yourselves the liberty to judge of princes' actions, with the affections of private men, and you may think a king an ill king: but yet, we are to him, as David says, *His brethren, his bone, his flesh*[22], and so reputed by him. God himself cannot stand upright in a natural man's interpretation, nor any king in a private man's. But then, how soon our adversaries come to call kings, ill kings, we see historically, when they boast of having deposed kings, *quia minus utiles*, because some other hath seemed to them, fitter for the government; and we see it prophetically, by their allowing those indictments, and attainders of kings, which stand in their books *de syndicatu*, that that king which neglects the duties of his place (and they must prescribe the duty, and judge the negligence too) that king, that exercises his prerogative, without just cause (and they must prescribe the prerogative, and judge the cause,) that that king that vexes his subjects, that that king that gives himself to intemperate hunting (for in that very particular they instance) that in such cases, (and they multiply these cases infinitely) kings are in their mercy, and subject to their censures, and corrections. We proceed not so, in censuring the actions of kings; we say, with St. Cyril, *Impium est dicere regi, iniquè agis;* It is an impious thing, (in him, who is only a private man, and hath no other obligations upon him) to say to the king, or of the king, He governs not as a king is bound to do: we remit the judgment of those their actions, which are secret to God; and when they are evident, and bad, yet we must endeavour to preserve their persons; for there is a danger in the loss, and a lamentation due to the loss, even of Zedekiah, for even such are *uncti Domini*, The anointed of the Lord, and the breath of our nostrils.

First, (as it lies in our text) the king is *spiritus narium*, the breath of our nostrils. First, *spiritus*, is a name, most peculiarly belonging to that blessed Person of the glorious Trinity, whose office it is to convey, to insinuate, to apply to us the mercies of

[22] 2 Sam. xix. 12.

the Father, and the merits of the Son: he is called by this name, by the word of this text, *Ruach*, even in the beginning of the creation, God had created heaven and earth, and then *The Spirit of God, sufflabat*, saith Pagnin's translation, (and so saith the Chaldee paraphrase too) it *breathed upon the waters*, and so induced, or deduced particular forms. So God hath made us, a little world of our own, this island; he hath given us heaven and earth, the truth of his Gospel, which is our earnest of heaven, and the abundance of the earth, a fruitful land; but then he, who is the Spirit of the Lord, he who is the breath of our nostrils, *incubat aquis*, (as it is said there in the creation) he moves upon the waters, by his royal and warlike navy at sea, (in which he hath expressed a special and particular care) and by the breath and influence of his providence throughout the land, he preserves, he applies, he makes useful those blessings unto us.

If this breath, that is, this power, be at any time soured in the passage, and contract an ill savour by the pipes that convey it, so, as that his good intentions are ill executed by inferior ministers, this must not be imputed to him; that breath that comes from the East, the bed and the garden of spices, when it is breathed out there, is a perfume, but by passing over the beds of serpents and putrefied lakes, it may be a breath of poison in the West: princes purpose some things for ease to the people, (and as such, they are sometimes presented to them) and if they prove grievances, they took their putrefaction in the way, that is, their corruption, from corrupt executors of good and wholesome intentions; the thing was good in the root, and the ill cannot be removed in an instant.

But then, we carry not this word *Ruach*, Spirit, so high; though since God hath said that kings are gods, the attribute of the Holy Ghost and his office, which is, to apply to man the goodness of God, belongs to kings also; for, God gives, but they apply all blessings to us. But here, we take the word literally, as it is in the text; *ruach, spirit*, is the breath that we breathe, the life that we live; the king is that breath, that life, and therefore that belongs to him. First our breath, that is, *sermo*, our speech belongs to him; *Be faithful unto him, and speak good of his name*, is commanded by David of God. To God's anointed, we

are not faithful, if we do not speak good of his name. First, there is an internal speech in the heart, and God looks to that; *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God;* though he say it but in his heart, yet he is a fool: for, as wise as a politician would think him, for saying it in his heart, and coming no further, yet even that is an overt act with God, for God seeth the heart. It is the fool that saith in his heart, There is no God, and it is the fool that saith in his heart, I would there were no king. That enormous, that infamous tragedy of the Levite's concubine, and her murder, of which it is said there, *There was no such thing seen, nor done before*[23], (and many things are done, which are never seen) with that emphatical addition, Consider of it, advise, and say your mind, hath this addition too, *In those days there was no king in Israel;* if there had been any king, but a Zedekiah, it could not have been so: *Curse not the king, not in thy thoughts*[24]: for, they are sins that tread upon the heels of one another, and that induce one another to conceive ill of God's lieutenant, and of God himself; for so the prophet joineth them, *They shall fret themselves, and curse their king, and their God*[25]: he that beginneth with the one, will proceed to the other.

Thus then he is our breath; our breath is his; our speech must be contained, not expressed in his dishonour; not in misinterpretations of his actions; jealousies have often made women ill; incredulity, suspiciousness, jealousy in the subject, hath wrought ill effects upon princes, otherwise not ill. We must not speak ill; but our duty is not accomplished in that abstinence, we must speak well: and in those things, which will not admit a good interpretation, we must be apt to remove the perverseness and obliquity of the act from him, who is the first mover to those who are inferior instruments. In these divers opinions which are ventilated in the school, how God concurreth to the working of second and subordinate causes, that opinion is I think, the most ancient, that denies that God works in the second cause, but hath only communicated to it, a power of working, and rest, himself. This is not true; God does work in every organ, and in every particular action; but yet though

[23] Judges xix. 30. [24] Eccles. x. 20. [25] Isaiah viii. 21.

he do work in all, yet he is no cause of the obliquity, of the perverseness of any action. Now, earthly princes are not equal to God; they do not so much as work in particular actions of instruments; many times, they communicate power to others, and rest wholly themselves; and then, the power is from them, but the perverseness of the action is not. God does work in ill actions, and yet is not guilty, but princes do not so much as work therein, and so may be excusable; at least, for any co-operation in the evil of the action, though not for countenancing, and authorizing an evil instrument; but that is another case.

They are our breath then; our breath is theirs, in good interpretations of their actions; and it is theirs especially, in our prayers to Almighty God, for them. The apostle exhorts us to pray; for whom? First, for all men in general; but in the first particular, that he descends to, for kings[26]. And both Theodoret, and Theophylact, make that the only reason, why the apostle did not name kings first, *Ut non videatur adulari*, Lest he should seem to flatter kings: whether mankind itself, or kings, by whom mankind is happy here, be to be preferred in prayer, you see both Theodoret, and Theophylact, make it a problem. And those prayers, there enjoined, were for infidel kings, and for persecuting kings; for even such kings, were the breath of their nostrils; their breath, their speech, their prayers were due to them. But then, beloved, a man may convey a satire into a prayer; a man may make a prayer a libel; if the intention of the prayer be not so much, to incline God to give those graces to the king, as to tell the world, that the king wants those graces, it is a libel. We say sometimes in scorn to a man, God help you, and God send you wit; and therein, though it have the sound of a prayer, we call him fool. So we have seen of late, some in obscure conventicles, institute certain prayers, That God would keep the king, and the prince in the true religion; the prayer is always good, always useful; but when that prayer is accompanied with circumstances, as though the king and the prince were declining from that religion, then even the prayer itself is libellous, and seditious; St. Paul, in that former place, apparels a subject's prayer well, when he says, Let prayers be given with

[26] 1 Tim. ii. 1.

thanks; let our prayers be for continuance of the blessings, which we have, and let our acknowledgment of present blessings, be an inducement for future: pray, and praise together; pray thankfully, pray not suspiciously: for, beloved in the bowels of Christ Jesus, before whose face I stand now, and before whose face I shall not be able to stand amongst the righteous, at the last day, if I lie now, and make this pulpit my shop, to vent sophisticate wares, in the presence of you, a holy part, I hope, of the militant church, of which I am, in the presence of the whole triumphant church, of which, by him, by whom I am that I am, I hope to be, in the presence of the Head of the whole church, who is all in all, I, (*and I think I have the Spirit of God*[27]) (I am sure, I have not resisted it in this point) I, (and I may be allowed to know something in civil affairs, (I am sure I have not been stupified in this point) do deliver that, which upon the truth of a moral man, and a Christian man, and a church man, believe to be true, that he, who is the breath of our nostrils, is in his heart, as far from submitting us to that idolatry, and superstition, which did heretofore oppress us, as his immediate predecessor, whose memory is justly precious to you, was: their ways may be divers, and yet their end the same, that is, the glory of God; and to a higher comparison, than to her, I know not how to carry it.

As then the breath of our nostrils, our breath, is his, that is, our speech, first, in containing it, not to speak in his diminution; then in uttering it amongst men; to interpret fairly, and loyally, his proceedings; and then in uttering it to God, in such prayers for the continuing thereof, as imply a thankful acknowledgment of the present blessings, spiritual and temporal, which we enjoy now by him; so far, breath is speech; but breath is life too, and so our life is his. How willingly his subjects would give their lives for him, I make no doubt, but he doubts not. This is argument enough for their propenseness and readiness, to give their lives, for his honour, or for the possessions of his children; that though not *contra voluntatem*, not against his will, yet *præter voluntatem*, without any declaration of his will, or pleasure, by any command, they have been as ready voluntarily, as if a press had commanded them. But these ways, which his wisdom hath

[27] 1 Cor. vii. 44.

chosen for the procuring of peace, have kept off much occasion of trial, of that, how willingly his subjects would have given their lives for him. Yet, their lives are his, who is the breath of their nostrils: and therefore, though they do not leave them for him, let them lead them for him; though they be not called to die for him, let them live so, as that may be for him; to live peaceably, to live honestly, to live industriously, is to live for him; for, the sins of the people endanger the prince, as much as his own. When that shall be required at your hand, then die for him; in the mean time, live for him; live so, as your living do not kindle God's anger against him, and that is a good confession, and acknowledgment, that he is the breath of your nostrils, that your life is his.

As then the breath of our nostrils is expressed by this word in this text, *ruach*, *spiritus*, speech, and life, so it is his. When the breath of life was first breathed into man, there it is called by another word, *neshamah*[28], and that is the soul, the immortal soul: And is the king the breath of that life? Is he the soul of his subjects so, as that their souls are his; so, as that they must sin towards men, in doing unjust actions, or sin towards God, in forsaking, and dishonouring him, if the king will have them? If I had the honour to ask this question, in his royal presence, I know he would be the first man, that would say, No, no; your souls are not mine, so. And, as he is a most perfect text-man, in the book of God, (and by the way, I should not easily fear his being a papist, that is a good text-man) I know he would cite Daniel, saying, *Though our God do not deliver us, yet know, O king, that we will not worship thy gods;* and I know he would cite St. Peter, We *ought to obey God rather than men*[29]; and he would cite Christ himself, *Fear not then*, (for the soul) *that cannot hurt the soul.* He claims not your souls so: It is *ruach* here, it is not *neshamah;* your life is his, your soul is not his, in that sense. But yet, beloved, these two words are promiscuously used in the Scriptures; *ruach* is often the soul; *neshamah* is often the temporal life; and thus far, the one, as well as the other, is the king's, that he must answer for your souls; so they are his; for he is not a king of bodies, but a king of men, bodies and souls;

[28] Gen. ii. 7. [29] Acts v. 29.

nor a king of men only, but of Christian men; so your religion, so your souls are his; his, that is, appertaining to his care, and his account. And therefore, though you owe no obedience to any power under heaven, so as to decline you from the true God, or the true worship of that God, and the fundamental things thereof, yet in those things, which are, in their nature but circumstantial, and may therefore, according to times, and places, and persons, admit alterations, in those things, though they be things appertaining to religion, submit yourselves to his directions; for here, the two words meet, *ruach*, and *neshamah*, your lives are his, and your souls are his too; his end being to advance God's truth, he is to be trusted much, in matters of indifferent nature, by the way.

He is the word of our text, *Spiritus*, as *Spiritus* is the Holy Ghost, so far, by accommodation, as that he is God's instrument to convey blessings upon us; and as *spiritus* is our breath, or speech, and as it is our life, and as it is our soul too, so far, as that in those temporal things which concern spiritual, (as times of meeting, and much of the manner of proceeding when we are met) we are to receive directions from him: so he is the breath of our nostrils, our speech, our lives, our souls, in that limited sense, are his.

But then, did those subjects of his (and I charge none but his subjects, with this plot, for I judge not them who are without) from whom God delivered us this day, did they think so of him, that he was the breath of our nostrils? If the breath be sour, if it be tainted and corrupt, (as they would needs think, in this case) is it good physic for an ill breath, to cut off the head, or to suffocate it, to smother, to strangle, to murder that man? He is the breath of their nostrils; they owe him their speech, their thanks, their prayers, and how have these *children of fools made him their song, and their by-word*[30]? How have these drunkards (men drunk with the Babylonian cup) made libels against him? How have those *seminatores verborum*[31], word-scatterers, defamed him, even with contrary defamations. Heretofore, that he persecuted their religion, when he did not; now, that he hath left his own religion. He is their breath, they owe him their tongues, and how foully do they speak; and they owe him their lives, and

[30] Job xxx. 1. [31] Acts xvii. 18.

how prodigally do they give away their lives to others, that they might take away his! He is their breath, (as breath is the soul) that is, accomptant for their souls, and how have they raised themselves out of his audit, and withdrawn themselves from his allegiance! This they have done historically, and to say prophetically, what they would do, first, their extenuation of this fact, when they call it an enterprise of a few unfortunate gentlemen. And then their exaltation of this fact, when they make the principal person in it, a martyr, this is prophecy enough, that since they are not ashamed of the original, they will not be afraid to copy it often, and pursue the same practices, to the same end.

Let it be Josiah then, let it be Zedekiah, he was the breath, the life of his subjects, (and that was the first attribute) and he was the anointed of the Lord, which is the other. Unction itself always separated that which was anointed from profane, and secular use; unction was a religious distinction. It had that signification in practise, before any law was given for it; when Jacob had had that vision upon the stone, which made him see, that that place was the house of God, and the gate of heaven[32], then he took up that stone which he had slept upon, and set it up for a pillar, and anointed it. This was the practice in nature; and then the precept in the Law, was, as for the altar itself, so for many other things, belonging to the service of God in the Temple, *Thou shalt anoint them, to sanctify them*[33]. Thus it was for things; and then, if we consider persons, we see the dignity that anointing gave: for it was given but to three sorts of persons, to kings, to priests, and to prophets: kings, and priests had it, to testify their ordinary, and permanent, and indelible jurisdiction, their power is laid on in oil; and prophets had it, because they were extraordinarily raised to denounce, and to execute God's judgments, upon persons that were anointed, upon priests, and upon kings too, in those cases, for which, they were then particularly employed. Thus then it is, anointed things could not be touched, but by anointed persons, and then anointed persons could not be touched, but by persons anointed; the priest not directed but by the king; the king, as king, not corrected, but by the prophet: and this was the state, that they lamented so compas-

[32] Gen. xxviii. 18.

[33] Exod. xxix. 36.

sionately, that their king, thus anointed, thus exempted, was taken prisoner, saw his sons slain in his presence, and then had his own eyes pulled out, was bound in chains, and carried to Babel.

And less than this, in himself, and in his Son, and in all, was not intended this day, against our, not Zedekiah, but Josiah: for death (speaking in nature) hath all particular miseries in it. An anointed king (and many kings anointed there are not) and he that is anointed *præ consortibus suis*, above his fellow kings, (for, I think, no other king of his religion, is anointed) the anointed of the Lord, who in this text hath both those great names, Meshiach Jehovah, Christus Domini, as though he had been but *the bramble anointed for king of the trees*[34], and so made the fitter fuel for their fire, as though (as David's lamentation is for Saul) *He had not been anointed with oil*[35], this eye of God, he by whom God looks upon us, this hand of God, he by whom God protects us, this foot of God, he by whom, in his due time, (and *Usquequo Domine*, How long, O Lord, before that time come!) God shall tread down, his own, and our enemies, was swallowed and devoured by them, in their confidence of their own plot, and their infallible assurance of his perishing. So it was historically; and how it stands prophetically, that is, what such as they were, would do for the future; as long as they write, (not in libels clandestinely and surreptitiously stolen out, but avowed by public authority[36]) That our priests are no priests, but the priests of Baal, for so they write, That the conspiracy of this day, being against him, who oppressed religion, was as just, as that against Cæsar, who did but oppress the state, and that they write, That those who were the actors herein, are therefore saved, because at their execution, they submitted all to the Roman church, and were content, if the church condemned it, then to repent the fact, for so they write also, That the religion of our present king, is no better, than the religion of Jeroboam, or of Numa Pompilius, for so they write too, That the last queen, though an heretic, yet because she was anointed, did cure that disease, the king's evil, but because, in scorn thereof, the king refused to be anointed at his coronation, therefore he cannot cure that disease, and so *non dicendus unctus Domini*, he is not to be called the anointed

[34] Judges ix. 8. [35] 2 Sam. i. 21. [36] Coquæus, fol. 18.

of the Lord, says that author, (for all these are the words of one man, and one, who had no other provocation to say all this but only the king's apology for the oath of allegiance) by retaining in their avowed books, and by relying upon such authors, and authorities as these, which remain for their future instruction, we see their dispositions for the future, and judge of them prophetically, as well as historically.

Now the misery which is here lamented, the declination of the kingdom, in the person of the king, is thus expressed, he was taken in their pits; taken, and taken in pits, and taken in their pits, are so many stairs, so many descents, so many gradations (rather degradations) in this calamity. Let it be Josiah, let it be Zedekiah; they were taken; taken, and never returned; let it be our Josiah, and will it hold in that application? Was he taken? He was plotted for, but was he taken? When he himself takes public knowledge, that both at home and abroad, those of the Roman persuasion assured themselves of some special work, for the advancement of their cause, at that time, when they had taken that assurance, he was so taken, taken in that their assurance, infallibly taken in their opinion; so, as this kingdom was taken in their opinion, who thought their navy invincible; so this king was taken in their assurance, who thought this plot infallible.

He was taken, and *in fovea*, in a pit, says the text; if our first translation would serve, the sorrow were the less, for there it is, he was taken in their net; now, a man that flattereth, spreadeth a net, and a prince that discerns not a flatterer, from a counsellor, is taken in a net; but that is not so desperate, as in a pit: in Josiah's case, it was a pit, a grave; in Zedekiah's case, it was a pit, a prison: in our Josiah's case, it was fully, as it is in the text, not *in fovea*, but *in foveis*, plurally, in their pits, in their divers pits; death in the mine where they began, death in the cellar where they pursued their mischief.

And then it was *in foveis illorum*, in their pits, says the text; but the text does not tell us, in whose; in the verse before, it is said, our persecutors did this, and this, then it follows, he was taken in their pits; in the persecutors' pits certainly; but yet, who are they? If it were Josiah that was taken, the persecutor

was Necho, king of Egypt, for from his army, Josiah received his death's wound[87]: if it were Zedekiah, the persecutor was Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, for he carried Zedekiah into captivity. Certainly the Holy Ghost knew well enough, and could have spoken plain, whose these pits were, but it pleased him to forbear names. Certainly our Josiah knows well enough, whose, those pits, which were digged for him, were; but, according to his natural sweetness, to decline the drawing of more blood, than necessarily he must, or the laying of imputations and aspersions upon more, than necessarily he must, he hath forborne names. The Holy Ghost knows better than all the expositors, in all our libraries, who digged those pits, our Josiah knows, better than all we, who come but to celebrate, and solemnize the deliverance, whose hands, and whose counsels were in the digging of these pits too. He was taken, says our text: *fuit*, he was. Fix that in Josiah, who was taken, and never taken back: fix it in Zedekiah, who was taken, and never taken back; they both perished; in both them, there is just cause, of perpetual, and permanent lamentation, and no room left, for the exercise of any other affection. But transfer it to our Josiah, and then, he was taken, is, he was but taken; God did not suffer his holy one to see corruption*, nor God did not suffer his anointed, to perish in this taking; and so the lamentation is become (as we said at first) a congratulation, so our *væ* is an *euge*, our exclamation turned to acclamation; and so our *de profundis*, is a *gloria in excelsis*, the pit, the vault is become a hill, from whence we may behold the power of our great God; this *Sepher Kinoth*, the Book of Lamentations, is become *Sepher Tehillim*, the Book of Psalms, and Thanksgivings; and David's *Bonus es omnibus*, *Lord thou art good to all*, is come to Moses' *Non taliter*, *Lord thou hast not done so well, with any nation*, as with us; for when we might have feared a *dereliquisti*, that God had forsaken us, we had St. Augustine, *appropinquavi et nesciebam*, we came nearer and nearer to God, and knew it not, we knew not our danger, and therefore knew not his special protection. It was one particular degree of his mercy, to proceed so: as it is an ease to a man, not to hear of his friend's sickness, till he hear it, by hearing of his

[87] 2 Chron. xxxv. 23.

* Folio edition, "correction."

recovery, so God did not shake us, with the knowledge of the danger, till he established us, with the deliverance: and by making his servant, and our sovereign, the blessed means of that discovery, and that deliverance, he hath directed us, in all apprehensions of dangers, to rely upon that wisdom, in civil affairs, affairs of state, and upon that zeal, in causes of religion, which he hath imprinted in that soul. Historically, God hath done great things for us, by him; prophetically, God hath great things to do for us, and all the Christian world, and will make him, his instrument to do them.

Now, we reserved at first, for the last gasp, and for the knot to tie up all, this consideration: that he that was truly affected in the sad sense of such a danger, and the pious sense of such a deliverance, would also use all means in his power, to secure the future, that that kingdom, in that king, might always be safe, from the like dangers. No doubt, our Josiah doth that, in that which appertaineth unto him; and all, that is, the care of all, appertaineth unto him. If God had made him his rod, to scourge others with wars and armies, we might be afraid, that when God had done his work by him, he would cast the rod in the fire; God doth not always bless those instruments, who love blood, though they pretend his glory. But since God hath made him his dove, to fly over the world, with the olive-branch, with endeavours of peace, in all places, as the dove did, so he shall ever bring his olive-branch to the ark, that is, endeavour only such peace, as may advance the church of God, and establish peace of conscience in himself.

That care, on his part, shall preserve him: and for his preservation, and ours in him, these things are to be done on our part: first, let us return to God, so, as God may look upon us, clothed in the righteousness of Christ; who will not be put on, as a fair gown, to cover coarse clothes; but first put off your sins, and then put on him; sins of the time, sins of your age, sins of your sex, sins of your complexion, sins of your profession; put off all; for your time, your age, your sex, your complexion, your profession, shall not be damned; but you, you yourselves shall. Do not think that your Sunday's zeal once a-week, can burn out all your extortions, and oppressions, and usury, and butchery,

and simony, and chambering and wantonness practised from Monday to Saturday. Do not think it to be so with the spiritual man, as with the natural: in a natural body, a great proportion of choler will rectify a cold, or old, or phlegmatic man; he is the better, for having so much choler; but a vehement zeal on Sunday, doth not rectify the six days' sinner: to cry out then, I am starved for want of an afternoon sermon, and to fast all the week long, so as never to taste how sweet the Lord is, in thy cleansing thy heart, and withdrawing thy hand from sin, this is no good diet; not only upon your allegiance to God, but upon your allegiance to the king, be good: no prince can have a better guard, than subjects truly religious. *Quantus murus patriæ est vir justus*, is St. Ambrose's holy exclamation, What a wall to a city, what a sea, what a navy to an island, is a holy man! The sins of former times, the sins and provocations of Manasseh, lay heavy upon Josiah[28], as well as God loved him. The sins of our days, our sins, may open any prince to God's anger. This is the first way of preserving our Josiah, to turn away the wrath of God, by our abstinence from future sins, after our repentance of former.

A second is, to uphold his honour and estimation with other men; especially amongst strangers that live with us, who for the most part, value princes so, as they find their subjects to value them. Ambassadors have ever been sacred persons, and partakers of great privileges. A prince, that lives as ours, in the eye of many ambassadors, is not as the children of Israel, in the midst of Canaanites, and Jebusites, and Ammonites, who all watched the destruction of Israel; but he is in the midst of tutelar angels, national angels, who study (by God's grace, and as it becomes us to hope) the peace and welfare of the Christian state. But then all strangers in the land, are not noble, and candid, and ingenuous ambassadors; and even ambassadors themselves may be misled to an undervalue of the prince, by rumours, and by disloyal, and by negligent speeches, from the subject; we have not yet felt Solomon's whips; but our whinings and repinings, and discontents may bring us to Rehoboam's scorpions[29]. This way hath a part, in the king's safety, and in our safety, to

[28] 2 Kings xxiii. 26. [29] 1 Kings xii. 11.

hold in ourselves, and to convey to strangers, a good estimation of that happy government, which is truly good in itself.

And then a third, and very important way towards his preservation, is, a cheerful disposition, to supply, and to support and to assist him, with such things as are necessary for his outward dignity. When God himself was the immediate King of the Israelites, and governed them, by himself, he took it ill, that they would depart from him, who needed nothing of theirs, for there could be no other king, but must necessarily be supplied by them: and yet, consider, beloved, what God, who needed nothing, took: the sacrifices of the Jews, were such, as would have kept divers royal houses: take a bill of them, but in one passover, that Josiah kept[40], and compare that and other the like, with the smallness of the land, that they possessed, and you will see, that that they gave, was a very great proportion. Now, it is the service of God, to contribute to the king, as well as to the priest: he that gives to a prophet, shall have a prophet's reward; he that gives to the king, shall have a king's reward, a crown: in those cases, where to give to your king, is to give to God, that is, where the peace of the state, and the glory of God in his Gospel depends much, upon the sustentation of the estimation, and outward honour and splendour of the king: preserve him so, and he shall the less be subject to these dangers, of such falling into their pits.

But lastly, and especially, let us preserve him, by preserving God amongst us, in the true, and sincere profession of our religion. Let not a mis-grounded, and disloyal imagination of coolness in him, cool you, in your own families. *Omnis Spiritus, qui solvit Jesum*[41], says the apostle, in the Vulgate, Every spirit that dissolves Jesus, that embraces not Jesus entirely, all Jesus, and all his, all his truth, and all that suffer for that truth, is not of God. Do not say, I will hold as much of Jesus, as shall be necessary, so much as shall distinguish me from a Turk, or a Jew, but if I may be the better, for parting with some of the rest, why should I not? Do not say, I will hold all, myself, but let my wife, or my son, or one of my sons, go the other way, as though Protestant, and Papist were two several callings; and, as you would make one son a lawyer, another a merchant, you will

[40] 2 Chron. xxxv. [41] 1 John iv. 3.

make one son a Papist, another a Protestant. Excuse not your own levity, with so high a dishonour to the prince; when have you heard, that ever he thanked any man, for becoming a papist? Leave his doors to himself; the doors into his kingdom, the ports, and the doors in his kingdom, the prisons; let him open and shut his doors, as God shall put into his mind: look thou seriously to thine own doors, to thine own family, and keep all right there. A thief that is let out of Newgate is not therefore let into thy house; a priest that is let out of prison, is not therefore let into thy house neither: still it may be felony, to harbour him, though there were mercy in letting him out. Cities are built of families, and so are churches too; every man keeps his own family, and then every pastor shall keep his flock, and so the church shall be free from schism, and the state from sedition, and our Josiah preserved, prophetically for ever, as he was historically this day, from them, in whose pits, the breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken. Amen.

SERMON CXXV.

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S CROSS, NOVEMBER 22, 1629.

MATTHEW xi. 6.

And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

THESE are words spoken by our blessed Saviour, to two disciples, sent by John Baptist, then a prisoner, to inform themselves of some particulars concerning Christ. Christ, who read hearts, better than we do faces, and heard thoughts clearer than we do words, saw in the thoughts, and hearts of these men, a certain perverseness, an obliquity, an irregularity towards him, a jealousy and suspicion of him, and according to that indisposition of theirs he speaks to them, and tells them, This, and this only is true blessedness, not to be scandalized in me, not to be offended in me; I see you are; but, as you love blessedness, (and there is no

other object of true love, but blessedness) establish yourselves in me, maintain in yourselves a submission, and an acquiescence to me, in my Gospel, suspect not me, be not jealous of me, nor press farther upon me, than I open and declare myself unto you, for, blessed is he, whosoever is not scandalized, not offended in me.

The words have in them an injunction, and a remuneration; a precept, and a promise; the way, and the end of a Christian. The injunction, the precept, the way is, As you love blessedness, be not offended in me, be satisfied with me, and mine ordinances; it is an acquiescence in the Gospel of Christ Jesus: and the remuneration, the promise, the end, is blessedness; that, which, in itself, hath no end, that, in respect of which, all other things are to no end, blessedness, everlasting blessedness, blessed is he, whosoever is not scandalized, not offended in me. In the first, Christ gives them first, if not an increpation, yet an intimation of our facility in falling into the passive scandal, the mis-interpreting of the words or actions of other men, which is that which our Saviour intends, by being offended in another; and blessed are they, in general, who are not apt to fall into this passive scandal, not subject to this facility of mis-interpreting other men. In a second branch in this first part, Christ appropriates this to himself, Blessed is he, whosoever is not scandalized, not offended in me; in which branch, we shall see, that the general scandal, and offence that the world took at Christ, and his Gospel, was, that he induced a religion that opposed the honours, and the pleasures, and the profit of this world: and these three being the triangle within our circle, the three corners, into which Satan, that compasses the world, leads us, (all is honour, or pleasure, or profit) because the Christian religion seemed to the world to withdraw men's affections from these, the world was scandalized, offended in Christ. But then, in a third consideration, we shall see, that Christ discerned in these two persons, these disciples of John, a passive scandal of another kind; not that Christ's Gospel, and the religion that he induced, was too low, too base, too contemptible, as the world thought, but that it was not low enough, not humble enough, and therefore John's disciples would do more than Christ's disciples, and bind themselves to a greater strictness and austerity of life, than Christ in his Gospel required. In

which third branch, we shall take knowledge of some disciples of John's disciples, in the world yet; and, (as for the most part it falls out in sectaries) of divers kinds and ways; for, we shall find some, who in an over-valuation of their own purity, condemn, and contemn other men, as unpardonable reprobates; and these are scandalized, and offended in Christ, that is, not satisfied with his Gospel, in that they will not see, that it is as well a part of the Gospel of Christ, to rely upon his mercy, if I have departed from that purity, which his Gospel enjoined me, as it is, to have endeavoured to have preserved that purity; and a part of his Gospel, as well to assist with my prayers, and my counsel, and with all mildness, that poor soul that hath strayed from that purity, as it is to love the communion of those saints, that have in a better measure preserved it; not to believe the mercy of God in Christ, after a sin, to be a part of the Gospel, as well as the grace of God for prevention before, not to give favourable constructions, and conceive charitable hopes of him, who is fallen into some sin, which I may have escaped, this is to be scandalized, to be offended in Christ, not to be satisfied with his Gospel; and this is one sect of the offspring of John's disciples. And the other is this, that other men thinking the Gospel of Christ to be too large a Gospel, a religion of too much liberty, will needs undertake to do more, than Christ, or his disciples practised, or his Gospel prescribed: for, this is to be offended in Christ, not to believe the means of salvation ordained by him, to be sufficient for that end, which they were ordained to, that is, salvation. And then, after all this, in a fourth branch we shall see, the way, which our Saviour takes to reclaim them, and to divest them of this passive scandal, which hindered their blessedness, which was, to call them to the contemplation of his good works, and of good works in the highest kind, his miracles; for, in the verse immediately before the text, (which verse induces the text) he says to them, You see the blind receive their sight, the lame go, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life. Christ does not propose, at least, he does not put all, upon that external purity, and austerity of life, in which, these disciples of John pretended to exceed all others, but upon doing good to others, the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk. Which miracles, and great works of his,

our blessed Saviour sums up with that, which therefore seems the greatest of all, *Pauperes evangelizantur*, *The poor have the Gospel preached unto them.* Beloved, the greatest good that we, (we to whom the dispensation of the word of reconciliation is committed) can do, is, to preach the Gospel to the poor, to assist the poor, to apply ourselves by all ways, to them, whether they be poor in estate, and fortune, or poor in understanding and capacity, or poor in their accounts and dis-estimation of themselves, poor and dejected in spirit. And all these considerations, which, as you see, are many, and important, (first our general easiness to fall into the passive scandal, to be offended in others, to misinterpret others; and then the general passive scandal and offence that the world took at Christ, that he induced a religion incapable of the honours, or the pleasures, or profits of this world; and thirdly, the particular passive scandal that disaffected these disciples of John towards Christ, which was, that his Gospel enjoined not enough, and therefore they would do more, in which kind, we find two sects in the world yet, the offspring, and disciples of those disciples; and then lastly, the way that Christ took to reclaim and satisfy them, which was, by good works, and the best works that they that did them, could do, (for in himself it was by doing miracles, for the good of others, and preferring in his good and great works, the assisting of the poor) all these considerations, I say, will fall into our first part, as you love blessedness, be not scandalized, be not offended in me, which is the injunction, the precept, the way. And, when in our due order, we shall come to our second part, the remuneration, the promise, the end, blessedness, everlasting blessedness, I may be glad, that the time will give me some colour, some excuse of saying little of that, as I can foresee already, by this distribution, that we shall be forced to thrust that part into a narrow conclusion. For, if I had Methusalem's years, and his years multiplied by the minutes of his years, (which were a fair term) if I could speak till the angels' trumpets blew, and you had the patience of martyrs, and could be content to hear me, till you heard the *surgite mortui*, till you were called to meet the Lord Jesus in the clouds, all that time would not make up one minute, all those words would not make up one syllable, towards this eternity, the

period of this blessedness. Reserving ourselves therefore for that, to those few minutes which may be left, or borrowed, when we come to the handling thereof, pursue we first, those considerations which fall more naturally into our comprehension, the several branches of our first part; As you love blessedness, be not scandalized, be not offended in me.

First then our Saviour's answer to these disciples of John, gives us occasion to consider our inclination, our propenseness to the passive scandal, to be offended in others, to misinterpret the words and actions of others, and to lament that our infirmity, or perverseness, in the words of our Saviour, *Væ mundo à scandalis*[1], Woe to the world by reason of scandals, of offences: for, that is both a *væ dolentis*, the voice of our Saviour lamenting that perverseness of ours, and *væ minantis*, his voice threatening punishments for that perverseness. For, *Parum distat scandalizare, et scandalizari*, says St. Hierome excellently; It is almost all one to be scandalized by another, as to scandalize another; almost as great a sin, to be shaked in our constancy, in ourselves, or in our charity towards others, as to offer a scandal to others. For, this *væ*, this intermination of woe from our Saviour, is bent upon us, from three batteries; for, it is *Væ quia illusiones fortes*, Woe, because scandals are so strong in their nature, as that they shall seduce, if it be possible, the elect[2]; and then, *Væ quia infirmi vos*, Woe, because you are so weak in your nature, as that, though you receive the word, and receive it with joy, yet *temporales estis*, you may be but time-servers for all that, for, as soon as persecution comes[3], *Ilico, continuo, scandalizamini*, Instantly, presently, you are scandalized, offended; but especially, *Væ quia prævaricatores*, Woe be unto you, not because the scandals are so strong, not because you are so weak, but because you prevaricate against your own souls, because you betray yourselves, and make yourselves weaker than you are, you open yourselves too easily to a scandal, you assist a scandal, create a scandal, by your aptness to misinterpret other men's proceedings. *Great peace have they that love thy law*, says David[4]: wherein consists this great peace? In this, *non est illis scandalum*, nothing scandalizes, nothing offends

[1] Matt. xviii. 7.
[2] Matt. xxiv. 32.
[3] Matt. xiii. 21.
[4] Psalm cxix. 165.

them, nothing puts them off from their kings, their constancy in themselves, their charity towards others. And therefore upon that prayer of David, *Liberet te Deus, ab homine malo*, The Lord deliver thee from the evil man, St. Augustine retires himself into himself, he sends every man home into himself, and says, *Liberet te Deus à te, ne sis tibi homo malus*, The Lord deliver thee from thyself, that thou be not that evil man to thyself; God bless me from myself, that I lead not myself into temptation, by a wilful misinterpreting of other men, especially my superiors; that I cast not aspersions or imputations upon the church, or the state, by my mistakings. And thus much being said of this general facility of falling into the passive scandal, and being offended in others, (which is a great interruption of blessedness, for blessed is he, and he only, that is not so scandalized, offended so) pass we now to the second branch of this first part, our Saviour's appropriating of this more particularly to himself, *Blessed is he, whosoever is not scandalized, not offended in me.*

Christ crucified, that is, the Gospel of Christ, is said by the apostle, to be *scandalum Judæis*, a scandal, a stumbling-block to the Jews, but *Græcis stultitia*[5], to the Grecians, to the Gentiles, mere foolishness. So that one scandal and offence that was taken at Christ, and his Gospel, was by the wise men, the learned, the philosophers of the world; they thought that Christ induced a religion improbable to reason, a silly and foolish religion. But these learned men, these philosophers, were sooner convinced and satisfied, than others. For, when we have considered Justin Martyr, and Minutius Felix, and Arnobius, and Origen, and Lactantius, and some things of Theodoret, and perchance one or two more, we have done with those fathers, that did anything against the Gentiles, and their philosophers, and may soon come to that question of the apostle, *Ubi sapiens*, Where is the wise man, where is the philosopher, where is the disputer of the world[6]? Indeed, all that the fathers writ against them, would not amount to so much, as may be found at one mart, of Papists against Protestants, or of Protestants, Lutherans and Calvinists, against one another. The reason is, reason will be satisfied, passion will not. And therefore, when it came to that issue

[5] 1 Cor. i. 23. [6] 1 Cor. i. 20.

between the Christian and the natural man, which religion was most conformable* to reason, it soon resolved into these two, whether it were more conformable to reason to believe one God, as the Christian does, or many, as the Gentiles; and then, being brought to the belief of one God, whether it were more conformable to reason, to believe three persons in that one God, as we, or but one, as they do. Now, for the first of these, the multiplicity of gods, it involved so many, so evident, so ridiculous absurdities, as not only those few fathers soon disputed them, but some of themselves, such as Lucian, soon laughed them, out of it; and so reason prevailed soon for the unity of the Godhead, that there is but one God, and that question was not long in suspense, nor agitation. And for the other, three persons in this one God, the Trinity, though we cannot so immediately prove that by reason, nor so entirely, altogether, yet, by these steps we can; first, that there is nothing in the doctrine of the Trinity against reason; the doctrine of the Trinity implies no contradiction; it may be so; and then, that it is so, if we have the word of God, for it, reason itself will conclude, that we have reason on our side; and that we have the word of God for it, we proceed thus, that for this book, which we call the Bible, which book delivers us the doctrine of the Trinity, we have far better reasons, and stronger arguments to satisfy any natural man, that this book is the word of God, than the Turk, or any professors of any other religion have, that those books which they pretend to be so, are so. So that positively for the first, that there is but one God, and comparatively for the other, that there are three persons, reason itself, (if we were bound to submit all religion to reason) may receive a satisfaction, a calm, and peaceable acquiescence. And so, the scandal that the philosophers took, was, with no great difficulty, overcome. But then the scandals that worldly and carnal men took, lasted longer. They were offended in Christ, that he induced an inglorious, a contemptible religion, a religion that opposed the honours of this world; and a sooty, and melancholic religion, a religion that opposed the pleasures, and delights of this world; and a sordid, and beggarly religion, a religion that opposed the gain, and the profit of this world. But were this

* Folio edition, "comfortable."

enough to condemn the Christian religion, if it did oppose worldly honour, or pleasure, or profit? Or does our religion do that? Be pleased to stop a little upon both these problems; whether that were enough to their ends, if it were so, and then, whether there be any such thing in our religion; and begin we with their first offence at Christ, the point of honour.

The apostle speaks of an eternal weight of glory[7], glory, a weight of glory, an eternal weight of glory; but where? In heaven, not in this world. The honours of this world, are far from being weights, or freights, or ballast to carry us steady; they are but light froths, but leaven, but fermentation, that puffs and swells us up. And they are as far from being eternal; for, in every family, we know, in which father, or grandfather the honour began, and we know not how soon, or how ignominiously it may end; but such ends of worldly honours, we see every day. When a lord meets a man that honours him, makes him courtesy, and curses him withal, what hath his lordship got by that honour? When popular acclamations cast him into insolent actions, and into the net of the law, where is the ease, the benefit, the consolation of his honour? But especially, if worldly honour must be had upon those conditions here, as shall hinder my eternal weight of glory hereafter, I should honour any dishonour, glorify any inglorious state, embrace any dunghill, call any poverty treasure, rather than bring the honours of this world into the balance, into competition, into comparison with that eternal weight of glory in heaven. So that if the Christian religion did oppose worldly honour, it were not to be opposed for that: but it is far from that; for, as no religion imprints more honour, more reverence, more subjection in the hearts of men, towards their superiors of all sorts, natural, or civil, or ecclesiastical, parents, or magistrates, or prelates, than the Christian religion does (for, we bind even the conscience itself) so never was there any form of religion upon the face of the earth, in which persons were capable of greater titles, and styles of dignity, than in the Christian church. Never any Moscovite, any Turk, received such titles, as the world hath, and does give to the bishop of Rome; so great, as that some of the greatest later emperors,

[7] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

have had an ambition of that dignity, and endeavoured to have been elected popes too, being emperors. If religion opposed honour, that should not diminish it; but it does not that, nor pleasure neither, which was another thing, in which, the world was offended in Christ.

As when we compared the honour of this world, with the glory of heaven, we found it nothing, so should we do the pleasures of this world, if we compared them with the joys of heaven. And therefore if my religion did enwrap me in a continual cloud, damp me in a continual vapour, smoke me in a continual sourness, and joylessness in this life, yet I have an abundant recompense in that reversion, which the Lord, the righteous Judge hath laid up for me, that I shall drink *è torrente voluptatis, of the rivers of his pleasures*[8]; pleasures, his pleasures, rivers, everflowing, overflowing rivers of his pleasures. So that if my religion denied me pleasure here, I would not deny my religion, nor be displeased with my religion for that; but it does not that; for what Christian is denied a care of his health, or of a good habitude of body, or the use of those things, which may give a cheerfulness to his heart, or a cheerfulness to his countenance? What Christian is denied such garments, or such ornaments, as his own rank, and condition, in particular requires, or as the national and general custom of his times hath induced and authorized? What Christian is denied conversation, or recreation, or honest relaxation of body or spirit? Excess of these pleasures, as well as in the heathen, as in the Christian, falls under Solomon's vanity, and vexation of spirit. But with the right use of these pleasures, the Christian hath that, which none but he hath, that *the Lord puts gladness into my heart*, that the Lord enables me to *lay me down in peace, and sleep*, that the Lord assures me that *he will keep me in safety*[9]. If religion excluded worldly pleasure, that were no cause of scandal or offence; but it does not that; no nor profit neither, which is a third consideration.

What is a man profited, says our Saviour, (he saw all the world was carried upon profit, and he goes along with them, that way) *What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose*

[8] Psalm xxxvi. 28. [9] Psalm iv. 8.

his own soul[10]? If a man have an answer to that question, that question of confusion, and consternation, that Christ asks, *Cujus erunt, Fool this night* they *shall fetch away thy soul*[11], and then, *Cujus erunt*, Whose shall all those things be, that thou hast provided? If a man can answer, *Hæredis erunt*, They shall be mine heir's, mine heir shall have them; besides that, though thy bell toll first, his may ring out first; though thou beest old and crazy, and sickly, *Though they do fetch away thy soul this night*, they may fetch away his before thine, thine heir may die before thee, and there is that assurance disappointed; if thine heir do enjoy all this, will all that distil one drop of cold water upon thy tongue in hell? And so is he, (says Christ, in the conclusion of that parable) *that layeth up riches for himself, and is not rich towards God.* So that if riches might not consist with religion, it would not hurt our cause; but they may, they do. *Godliness hath the promise of this life, and of the next*[12]; of both, but of this first. *The seed of the righteous, shall be mighty upon earth, and wealth and riches shall be in his house*[13]. Many places of Scripture tell us that the wicked may be rich, and that they are rich; but in no place does God promise that they shall be rich. So says David's son, Solomon, too, *The crown of the wise is their riches*[14]; we all know what men Solomon means by wise men; godly men, religious men; and their crown is riches. Beloved, there is an inward joy, there is an outward dignity and reverence, that accompanies riches, and the godly, the righteous man is not incapable of these; nay, they belong rather to him, than to the ungodly: *Non decent stultum divitiæ*, (as the Vulgate reads that place) *Riches do not become a fool*[15]. But because, for all that, though riches do not become a fool, yet fools do become rich; our translations read that place thus: joy, pleasure, delight, is not seemly for a fool; though the fool, the ungodly man, may be rich, yet a right joy, a holy delight in riches, belongs only to the wise, to the righteous. The patriarchs in the Old Testament, many examples in the New, are testimonies to us of the compatibility of riches, and righteousness; that they may, that they have often met in one person. For, is fraud, and circumvention

[10] Matt. xvi. 26. [11] Luke xii. 10. [12] 1 Tim. iv. 8.
[13] Psalm cxii. 3. [14] Prov. xiv. 24. [15] Prov. xix. 10.

so sure a way, of attaining God's blessings, as industry, and conscientiousness is? Or is God so likely to concur with the fraudulent, the deceitful man, as with the laborious, and religious? Was not Ananias, with his disguises, more suddenly destroyed, than Job, and more irrecoverably? And cannot a Star-chamber, or an Exchequer, leave an ungodly man as poor, as a storm at sea, in a shipwreck, or a fire at land, in a lightning, can do the godly? Murmur not, be not scandalized, nor offended in him, if God, for reasons reserved to himself, keep them in poverty; but know, that God hath exposed the riches of this world, as well, rather to the godly, than the wicked. And so have you the second branch of this first part, the scandals which, for the most part, were taken at Christ, and his Gospel, by the philosophers, that it was a religion contrary to reason, by worldly, and carnal men, that it was a religion contrary to the honours, to the pleasures, to the profits of this world; which, if it were so, were no impeachment to it, but it is not: and so we are come to the third branch, the particular passive scandal, which our Saviour deprehended in these two disciples of John, diverse from the rest.

That, which misaffected them towards Christ, was not that he induced a religion too low, too sordid, too humble, but not low enough, not humble enough; and therefore they would outbid Christ, and undertake more, than his disciples practised, or himself prescribed. Their master, John Baptist, discerned this distemper in them, then when they said to him, *Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, baptizes as fast as thou*, and *all the world comes to him*[16]. John Baptist deals plainly with them, and he tells them, that they must not be offended in that, for so it must be, *He must increase*, and *I must decrease*. This troubled them; and because it did so, John sends them personally to Christ, to receive further satisfaction. When they come at first to him, they say, *Sir, we fast*, and, *even the Pharisees fast*, why *do not you, and your disciples fast too*[17]? And then our blessed Saviour enlarges himself to them, in that point of fasting, and they go home satisfied. Now they return again, and they continue their wonder, that Christ should continue his greatness, and his estimation in the world, they exceeding him so far in this out-

[16] John iii. 26, 30. [17] Matt. ix. 14.

ward austerity of life, which was so specious, and so winning a thing amongst the Jews. But *duo discipuli fortasse duo populi*[18], these two disciples of John may have their disciples in the world to this day; and therefore forbearing their persons, we shall consider their offspring; those men, who in an over-valuation of their own purity, despise others, as men whom nothing can save; and those men, who in an over-valuation of their own merits, think to save themselves and others too, by their supererogations.

Begin we with the first, the over-pure despisers of others; men that will abridge, and contract the large mercies of God in Christ, and elude, and frustrate, in a great part, the general promises of God. Men that are loth, that God should speak so loud, as to say, he would have all men saved, and loth that Christ should spread his arms, or shed his blood in such a compass, as might fall upon all. Men that think no sin can hurt them, because they are elect, and that every sin makes every other man a reprobate. But with the Lord there is *copiosa redemptio*, plentiful redemption[19], and an overflowing cup of mercy. *Aquæ quæ non mentiuntur*, as the Holy Ghost says more than once, more than many times, in the prophets, waters that will not lie, that will not dry, not deceive, not disappoint any man. The *wisdom that is from above, is first pure, and then peaceable*[20]. Purity, sincerity, integrity, holiness, is a skirt of Christ's garment; it is the very livery that he puts upon us; we cannot serve him without it, (we must serve him in holiness and pureness) we cannot see him without it, without holiness no man shall see God. But then to be pure, and not peaceable, to determine this purity in ourselves, and condemn others, this is but an imaginary, but an illusory purity. Not to have relieved that poor wretch, that lay wounded, and weltering in his blood in the way to Jericho, was the uncharitableness of the Levite, and the priest, in that parable[21]. But that parable presents no man so uncharitable, as would have hindered the Samaritan, from pouring his oil, and his wine into the wounds of that distressed wretch. To hinder the blood of Christ Jesus, not to suffer that blood to flow

[18] Ambrose.
[19] Psalm cxxx. 7.
[20] James iii. 17.
[21] Luke x. 30.

as far, as it will, to deny the mercy of God in Christ, to any sinner, whatsoever, upon any pretence, whatsoever, this is to be offended in Christ, to be scandalized with his Gospel; for, that is his own precept, have salt in yourselves, (be it, purity, the best preservative of the soul) and then, *Have peace with one another*[22], deny no man the benefit of Christ; bless thou the Lord, praise him, and magnify him, for that which he hath done for thee, and believe, that he means as well to others, as to thee. And these are one sect of the disciples of John's disciples. that think there are men, whom Christ cannot save, and the other is of men that think they can save other men.

Ignatius, who is so ancient, as that we have letters from him to St. John, and from him to the blessed Virgin, and (if the copies be true) from her to him, as ancient as he is, says, *Monet quisquam antiquorum*, One of the ancients hath given us this caution, *Ut nemo bonus, dicatur qui malum bono permiscuerit*, That we call no man good, that is good to ill ends, nor believe any man to speak truth, that speaks truth at some times, to make his future lies the more credible. And much this way does the Roman church proceed with us, in this behalf. They magnify sanctification, and holiness of life well; well do they propose many good means, for the advancement, and exaltation thereof; fasting, and prayer, and alms, and other medicinal disciplines, and mortifications. But all this to a wrong end; not to make them the more acceptable to God, but to make God the more beholden to them; to merit, and over-merit; to satisfy, and super-satisfy the justice of God for their own, and for others' sins. Now, God will be served with all our power; but, say they, we may serve God, with more than all our power. How? because I may have more power, more grace, more help, to-day, than I had yesterday? But does not the same commandment, of serving God, with all my power, lie upon me, to-day, as did yesterday? If yesterday, when I had less power, less grace, less help, all was but duty and service that could be done, is it the less a service and a duty now, because God hath enlarged my capacity with more grace, and more helps than before? Do I owe God the less, because he hath given me more? All that my Saviour hath

[22] Mark ix. 50.

taught me, in this, to pray for, is but this, *Dimitte debita*, Lord forgive me the not endeavouring to keep thy commandments: but for not doing more than thy commandments, I ask no forgiveness, by any prayer, or precept recommended to me by him. *Ad evangelii impletionem conscendat nostra religio, nec transcendat;* says the learnedest nun, and the best matriarch, and mother of that church, I think, that ever writ, Heloyssa; I pray God, our order may get so far, as the Gospel enjoys, and not press beyond that; *Nec quid amplius, quam ut Christianæ simus, appetamus,* That we desire to be no more, than good Christians. And further we extend not this third consideration, the particular passive scandal, which Christ found in these disciples of John, and which we have noted in their progeny, and offspring, but go on to the fourth, the way that Christ took to divest them thereof, by calling them to the contemplation of his works, Consider what you have seen done, the blind see, the lame go, the deaf hear, and then you will not endanger your blessedness, by being offended in me.

The evidence that Christ produces, and presses, is good works; for, if a man offer me the root of a tree to taste, I cannot say this is such a pear, or apple, or plum; but if I see the fruit, I can. If a man pretend faith to me, I must say to him, with St. James, *Can his faith save him*[23]? Such a faith, as that the apostle declares himself to mean, a dead faith, as all faith is that is inoperative, and works not. But if I see his works, I proceed the right way in judicature, I judge *secundum allegata et probata*, according to my evidence: and if any man will say, Those works may be hypocritical, I may say of any witness, he may be perjured; but as long as I have no particular cause to think so, it is good evidence to me, as to hear that man's oath, so to see this man's works. *Cum in cœlis sedentem in crucem agere non possum*[24], Though I cannot crucify Christ, being now set at the right hand of his Father in heaven, yet there is *Odium impietatis*, saith that father, A crucifying by ungodliness; an ungodly life in them that profess Christ, is a daily crucifying of Christ. Therefore here Christ refers to good works; and there is more in this than so: it is not only good works, but good works in the highest proportion, the best works, that he that doth them, can do: therefore,

[23] James ii. 14. [24] Hilary.

in his own case he appeals to miracles. For if fasting were all, or wearing of camel's hair, all, or to have done some good to some men, by baptizing them, were all, these disciples and their master might have had as much to plead as Christ. Therefore he calls them to the consideration of works of a higher nature, of miracles; for, God never subscribes nor testifies a forged deed; God never seals a falsehood with a miracle. Therefore, when the Jews say of Christ, *He hath a devil, and is mad, why hear ye him*[25]? some of the other Jews said, *These are not the words of one that hath a devil:* but though by that it appear, that some evidence, some argument may be raised in a man's behalf, from his words, from that he saith, from his preaching, yet Christ's friends who spoke in his favour, do not rest in that, That those are not the words of one that hath a devil, but proceed to that, Can the devil open the eyes of the blind? He doth more than the devil can do; they appeal to his works, to his good works, to his great works, to his miracles. But doth he put us to do miracles? No; though, in truth those sumptuous and magnificent buildings, and endowments, which some have given for the sustentation of the poor, are almost miracles, half-miracles, in respect of those penurious proportions, that mint and cumin, and those half-ounces of broken bread, which some as rich as they, have dropped and crumbled, out; truly, he that doth as much as he can, is almost a miracle; and when Christ appeals to his miracles he calls us therein, to the best works we can do. God will be loved with the whole heart, and God will have that love declared with our whole substance. I must not think I have done enough, if I have built an alms'-house; as long as I am able to do more, I have done nothing. This Christ intimates in producing his greatest works, miracles; which miracles he closeth up with that, as with the greatest, *Pauperes evangelizantur*, The poor have the Gospel preached unto them.

In this our blessed Saviour doth not only give an instruction to John's disciples, but therein also derives and conveys a precept upon us, upon us, who as we have received mercy, have received the ministry, and indeed, upon all you, whom he hath made *regale sacerdotium*, a royal priesthood[26], and *reges et sacerdotes*,

[25] John x. 20. [26] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

kings and priests unto your God[27], and bound you thereby, as well as us, to preach the Gospel to the poor, you, by an exemplar life, and a catechizing conversation, as well as us, by our words and meditations. Now beloved, there are poor, that are literally poor, poor in estate and fortune; and poor, that are naturally poor, poor in capacity, and understanding; and poor, that are spiritually poor, dejected in spirit, and insensible of the comforts, which the Holy Ghost offers unto them; and to all these poor, are we all bound to preach the Gospel. First then for them which are literally poor, poor in estate, how much do they want of this means of salvation, preaching, which the rich have? They cannot maintain chaplains in their houses; they cannot forbear the necessary labours of their calling, to hear extraordinary sermons; they cannot have seats in churches, whensoever they come; they must stay, they must stand, they must thrust, they must overcome that difficulty, which St. Augustine makes an impossibility, that is, for any man to receive benefit by that sermon, that he hears with pain: they must take pains to hear. To these poor therefore, the Lord and his Spirit hath sent me to preach the Gospel; that Gospel, *The Lord knoweth thy poverty, but thou art rich*[28]; that Gospel, *Be content with such things as thou hast, for the Lord hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*[29]; and that Gospel, *God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of that kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him*[30]; and this is the Gospel of those poor, literally poor, poor in estate. To those that are naturally poor, poor in understanding, the Lord and his Spirit hath sent me to preach the Gospel too; that Gospel, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God*[31]; Solomon himself had none, till he asked it there. And that Gospel where John wept bitterly, because there was a book presented, but *no man could open it*[32]. It were a sad consideration, if now, when the book of God, the Scripture is afforded to us, we could not open that book, not understand those Scriptures. But there is the Gospel of those poor; that Lamb, which is spoken of there, that Lamb, which in the same place is called a Lion too, that Lamb-Lion hath opened the book for us. The

[27] Rev. v. 10. [28] Rev. ii. 9. [29] Heb. xiii. 5.
[30] James ii. 5. [31] James i. 5. [32] Rev. v. 4.

humility of the lamb gathereth the strength of the lion; come humbly to the reading and hearing of the Scriptures, and thou shalt have strength of understanding. The Scriptures were not written for a few, nor are to be reserved for a few; all they that were present at this Lamb-Lion's opening of the book, that is, all they that come with modesty and humility, to the search of the Scriptures, all they, (and they are no small number, for there they are said to be ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands) all they say there, We are all made kings and priests unto our God. Begin a lamb, and thou wilt become a lion; read the Scriptures modestly, humbly, and thou shalt understand them strongly, powerfully; for hence is it that St. Chrysostom, more than once[33], and St. Gregory after him, meet in that expression, That the Scriptures are a sea, in which a lamb may wade, and an elephant may swim. And this is the Gospel of those poor, poor in understanding. To those that are spiritually poor, wrung in their souls, stung in their consciences, fretted, galled, exulcerated viscerally, even in the bowels of their spirit, insensible, inapprehensive of the mercies of God in Christ, the Lord and his Spirit hath sent me to preach the Gospel also, that Gospel, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;* and to recollect, and redintegrate that broken and scattered heart, by enabling him to expostulate, and chide his own soul, with those words of comfort, which the Holy Ghost offereth him, once, and again, and again, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; and, yet praise him for the light of his countenance*[34]. Words of inexpressible comfort, yet praise him for the light of his countenance; though thou sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, yet praise him for the light of his countenance. Whatsoever thy darkness be, put not out that candle, the light of his countenance. Maintain that light, discern that light, and whatsoever thy darkness seemed, it shall prove to be but an overshadowing of the Holy Ghost. And so beloved, if you have sufficiently considered, first, our general easiness of falling into the passive scandal, of being offended in others, by misinterpreting their proceedings, and then the general

[33] Homily ii. in Gen. and iii in 2 Thess.
[34] Psalm xlii. 5. 11. Psalm xliii. 5.

scandals which the world took at Christ, and his Gospel, the philosophers, that it was an ignorant religion, (where you saw, that the learneder the adversary is, the sooner he is satisfied) and the worldly and carnal man, that it was a dishonourable, an unpleasurable, an unprofitable religion, (where you saw, that it were no diminution of our religion, if it were all that, but it is none of it) if you have also considered the particular passive scandal that Christ deprehended in those two disciples of John, that they would do more than Christ practised or prescribed, (where you saw also the distemper of those, that are derived from them, both those that think there are some sinners whom Christ cannot save, and those who think there are no sinners whom they cannot save, by their supererogations) and considered lastly, the way that Christ took, to divest these men of this offence, and passive scandal, which was to call them to the consideration of good works, and of the best works, which he that doth them, can do, (where you have also seen, that Christ makes that our best work, To preach the Gospel to the poor, both because the poor are destitute of other comforts, and because their very poverty hath suppled them, and mellowed them, and macerated, and matured, and disposed them, by corrections to instructions) if you have received all this, you have received all that we proposed for the first part, the injunction, the precept, the way, *Be not scandalized, be not offended in me.* And now, that which I suspected at first, is fallen upon me, that is to thrust our other part into a narrow conclusion, though it be blessedness itself, everlasting blessedness; so we must; so we shall; *blessed is he,* (there is the remuneration, the promise, the end) *whosoever is not offended in me. Blessed.*

The heathen, who saw by the light of nature, that they could have no being, if there were no God, (for it is from one of themselves, that St. Paul says, *In him we live, and move, and have our being,* and *Genus ejus sumus*[85], We are the offspring of God) sa also by the same light of nature, that they could have no well-being, if there were no blessedness. And therefore, as the heathen multiplied gods to themselves, so did they also multiply blessedness. They brought their Jupiters to three hundred, says Varro;

[85] Acts xvii. 28.

and from the same author, from Varro, does St. Augustine collect almost three hundred several opinions of blessedness. But, *in multitudine nullitas*, says Tertullian excellently; as where there are many gods, there is no god, so where there are many blessednesses imagined, there is no blessedness possessed. Not but that, as the sun which moves only in his own sphere in heaven, does yet cast down beams and influences into this world, so that blessedness, which is truly, only in heaven, does also cast down beams and influences hither, and gild, and enamel, yea inanimate the blessings of God here, with the true name, the true nature of blessedness. For, though the Vulgate edition do read that place[36], thus, *Beatum dixerant populum*, The world thought that people blessed that were so, that is temporally blessed, as though that were but an imaginary, and not a true blessedness; and howsoever it have seemed good to our translators, to insert into that verse a discretive particle, a particle of difference, Yea, (Blessed are the people that are so,) that is, temporally blessed, Yea, blessed are the people whose God is the Lord, yet, in truth, in the original, there is no such discretive particle, no word of difference, no yea, in the text, but both the clauses of that verse are carried in one and the same tenour, *Blessed are the people that are so, Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord;* that is, that people whom the Lord hath blessed so, with temporal blessings, is bound to believe those temporal blessings, to be seals and evidences to them that the Lord is their God. So then there is a *viatory*, a preparatory, an initiatory, an inchoative blessedness in this life. What is that? All agree in this definition, that blessedness is that *in quo quiescit animus*, in which the mind, the heart, the desire of man hath settled, and rested, in which it found a centrical reposedness, an acquiescence, a contentment. Not that which might satisfy any particular man; for, so the object would be infinitely various; but that, beyond which no man could propose anything; and is there such a blessedness in this life? There is. *Fecisti nos Domine ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec quiescat in te*[37]; Lord thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart cannot rest, till it get to thee. But can we come to God here? We cannot. Where is then our

[36] Psalm CXLIV. 45.

[37] Augustine.

viatory, our preparatory, our initiatory, our inchoative blessedness? Beloved, though we cannot come to God here, here God comes to us; here, in the prayers of the congregation God comes to us; here, in his ordinance of preaching, God delivers himself to us; here in the administration of his sacraments, he seals, ratifies, confirms all unto us; and to rest in these his seals and means of reconciliation to him, this is not to be scandalized, not to be offended in him; and, not to be offended in him, not to suspect him or these means which he hath ordained, this is our viatory, our preparatory, our initiatory and inchoative blessedness, beyond which, nothing can be proposed in this life. And therefore, as the needle of a sea-compass, though it shake long, yet will rest at last, and though it do not look directly, exactly to the North Pole, but have some variation, yet, for all that variation, will rest, so, though thy heart have some variations, some deviations, some aberrations from that direct point, upon which it should be bent, which is an absolute conformity of thy will to the will of God, yet, though thou lack something of that, afford thy soul rest: settle thy soul in such an infallibility, as this present condition can admit, and believe, that God receives glory as well in thy repentance, as in thine innocence, and that the mercy of God in Christ, is as good a pillow to rest thy soul upon after a sin, as the grace of God in Christ is a shield, and protection for thy soul before. In a word, this is our viatory, our preparatory, our initiatory, and inchoative blessedness, beyond which there can be no blessedness proposed here, first to receive a satisfaction, an acquiescence, that there are certain and constant means ordained by Christ, for our reconciliation to God in him, in all cases, in which a Christian soul can be distressed, that such a treasure there is deposited by him, in the church, and then, the testimony of a rectified conscience, that thou hast sincerely applied those general helps to thy particular soul. Come so far, and then, as the suburbs touch the city, and the porch the church, and deliver thee into it, so shall this viatory, this preparatory, this initiatory and inchoative blessedness deliver thee over to the everlasting blessedness of the kingdom of heaven. Of which everlasting blessedness, I would ask leave, not so much of you;

(yet of you too, for with you, I would not be over bold) but I would ask leave of the angels of heaven, leave of the Holy Ghost himself, to venture to say a little, of this everlasting blessedness: the tongues of angels cannot, the tongues of the Holy Ghost, the authors of the books of Scripture have not told us, what this blessedness is; and what then shall we say, but this?

Blessedness itself, is God himself; our blessedness is our possession; our union with God. In what consists this? A great limb of the School with their Thomas, place this blessedness, this union with God, *in visione*, in this, That in heaven I shall see God, see God essentially, God face to face, God as he is. We do not see one another so, in this world; in this world we see but outsides; in heaven I shall see God, and God essentially. But then another great branch of the School, with their Scotus, place this blessedness, this union with God, *in amore*, in this, that in heaven, I shall love God. Now love presumes knowledge; for, *Amari nisi nota non possunt*[38], We can love nothing, but that which we do, or think we do understand. There, in heaven, I shall know God, so, as that I shall be admitted, not only to an adoration of God, to an admiration of God, to a prosternation, and reverence before God, but to an affection, to an office, of more familiarity towards God, of more equality with God, I shall love God. But even love itself, as noble a passion as it is, is but a pain, except we enjoy that we love; and therefore another branch of the School, with their Aureolus, place this blessedness, this union of our souls with God, *in gaudio*, in our joy, that is, in our enjoying of God. In this world we enjoy nothing; enjoying presumes perpetuity; and here, all things are fluid, transitory: there I shall enjoy, and possess for ever, God himself. But yet, every one of these, to see God, or to love God, or to enjoy God, have seemed to some too narrow to comprehend this blessedness, beyond which, nothing can be proposed; and therefore another limb of the School, with their Bonaventure, place this blessedness in all these together. And truly, if any of those did exclude any of these, so, as that I might see God, and not love him, or

[38] Augustine.

love God, and not enjoy him, it could not well be called blessedness; but he that hath any of these, hath every one, all: and therefore the greatest part concur, and safely, *in visione*, that vision is beatification, to see God, as he is, is that blessedness.

There then, in heaven, I shall have *continuitatem intuendi;* it is not only vision, but intuition, not only a seeing, but a beholding, a contemplating of God, and that *in continuitate*, I shall have an uninterrupted, an unintermitted, an undiscontinued sight of God; I shall look, and never look off; not look, and look again, as here, but look, and look still, for that is, *continuitas intuendi.* There my soul shall have *inconcussam quietum;* we need owe Plato nothing; but we may thank Plato for this expression, if he meant so much by this *inconcussa quies*, That in heaven my soul shall sleep, not only without trouble, and startling, but without rocking, without any other help, than that peace, which is in itself; my soul shall be thoroughly awake, and thoroughly asleep too; still busy, active, diligent, and yet still at rest. But the apostle will exceed the philosopher, St. Paul will exceed Plato, as he does when he says, *I shall be unus spiritus cum Deo*[39], I shall be still but the servant of my God, and yet I shall be the same spirit with that God. When? *Dies quem tanquam supremum reformidas, æterni natalis est*, says the moral man's oracle, Seneca. Our last day is our first day, our Saturday is our Sunday, our eve is our holyday, our sun-setting is our morning, the day of our death, is the first day of our eternal life. The next day after that, which is the day of judgment, *Veniet dies, quæ me mihi revelabit*, comes that day that shall show me to myself; here I never saw myself, but in disguises: there, then, I shall see myself, and see God too. *Totam lucem, et totus lux aspiciam;* I shall see the whole light; here I see some parts of the air enlightened by the sun, but I do not see the whole light of the sun; there I shall see God entirely, all God, *totam lucem*, and *totus lux*, I myself shall be all light to see that light by. Here, I have one faculty enlightened, and another left in darkness: mine understanding sometimes cleared, my will, at the same time perverted. There, I shall be all light,

[39] 1 Cor. vi. 17.

no shadow upon me; my soul invested in the light of joy, and my body in the light of glory. How glorious is God, as he looks down upon us, through the sun! How glorious is that glass of his! How glorious is God, as he looks out amongst us through the king! How glorious in that image of his! How glorious is God, as he calls up our eyes to him, in the beauty, and splendour, and service of the church! How glorious in that spouse of his! But how glorious shall I conceive this light to be, *cum suo loco viderim*, when I shall see it, in His own place. In that sphere, which though a sphere, is a centre too; in that place, which, though a place, is all, and everywhere. I shall see it, in the face of that God, who is all face, all manifestation, all innotescence to me, (for, *Facies Dei est, qua Deus nobis innotescit*[40], That is God's face to us, by which God manifests himself to us) I shall see this light in his face, who is all face, and yet all hand, all application, and communication, and delivery of all himself to all his saints. This is *beatitudo in auge*, blessedness in the meridional height, blessedness in the south point, in a perpetual summer solstice, beyond which nothing can be proposed, to see God so, then, there. And yet the farmers of heaven and hell, the merchants of souls, the Roman church, make this blessedness, but an under degree, but a kind of apprenticeship; after they have beatified, declared a man to be blessed in the fruition of God in heaven, if that man, in that inferior state do good service to that church, that they see much profit will rise, by the devotion, and concurrence of men, to the worship of that person, then they will proceed to a canonization; and so, he that in his novitiate, and years of probation was but blessed Ignatius, and blessed Xavier, is lately become St. Xavier, and St. Ignatius. And so they pervert the right order, and method, which is first to come to sanctification, and then to beatification, first to holiness, and then to blessedness. And in this method, our blessed God be pleased to proceed with us, by the operation of his Holy Spirit, to bring us to sanctification here, and by the merits and intercession of his glorious Son, to beatification hereafter. That so not being offended in him, but resting in those means and seals,

[40] Augustine.

of reconciliation, which thou hast instituted in thy church, we may have life, and life more abundantly, life of grace here, and life of glory there, in that kingdom, which thy Son, our Saviour Christ Jesus hath purchased for us, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. Amen.

SERMON CXXVI.

PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S, APRIL 11, 1624.
The first Sermon in that Church, as Vicar thereof.

DEUTERONOMY XXV. 5.

If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without, unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.

FROM the beginning God intimated a detestation, a dislike of singularity; of being alone. The first time that God himself is named in the Bible, in the first verse of Genesis, he is named plurally, *Creavit Dii*, Gods, Gods in the plural, created heaven and earth. God, which is but one, would not appear, nor be presented so alone, but that he would also manifest more persons. As the Creator was not singular, so neither were the creatures; first, he created heaven and earth; both together; which were to be the general parents, and out of which were to be produced all other creatures; and then, he made all those other creatures plurally too; *Male, and female created he them;* and when he came to make him, for whose sake, (next to his own glory) he made the whole world, Adam, he left not Adam alone, but joined an Eve to him; now, when they were married, we know, but we know not when they were divorced; we hear when Eve was made, but not when she died; the husband's death is recorded at last, the wife's is not at all. So much detestation hath God himself, and so little memory would he have kept of any singularity, of being alone. The union of Christ to the whole church is not

expressed by any metaphor, by any figure, so oft in the Scripture, as by this of marriage: and there is in that union with Christ to the whole church, neither husband, nor wife can ever die; Christ is immortal as he is himself, and immortal, as he is the head of the church, the husband of that wife: for that wife, the church is immortal too; for as a prince is the same prince, when he fights a battle, and when he triumphs after the victory: so the Militant, and the Triumphant church is the same church. There can be no widower, there can be no dowager, in that case; he cannot, she cannot die. But then this metaphor, this spiritual marriage, holds not only between Christ and the whole church, in which case there can be no widow, but in the union between Christ's particular ministers, and particular churches; and there, in that case, the husband of that wife may die; the present minister may die, and so that church be a widow; and in that case, and for provision of such widows, we consider the accommodation of this law. If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without, unto a stranger, &c.

This law was but a permissive law; rather a dispensation, than a law: as the permitting of usury to be taken of strangers, and the permitting of divorces in so many cases, were. At most it was but a judicial law, and therefore lays no obligation, upon any other nation, than them, to whom it was given, the Jews. And therefore we inquire not the reasons of that law, (the reasons were determined in that people) we examine not the conveniences of the law; (the conveniences were determined in those times) we lay hold only upon the typic signification, and appliableness of the law, as that secular marriage there spoken of, may be appliable to this spiritual marriage, the marriage of the minister to the church: *If brethren dwell together*, &c.

From these words then, we shall make our approaches, and application, to the present occasion, by these steps; first, there is a marriage, in the case. The taking, and leaving of a church, is not an indifferent, an arbitrary thing; it is a marriage, and marriage implies, honour: it is an honourable estate, and that implies charge, it is a burdensome state; there is *honos*, and *onus*, honour, and labour, in marriage; you must be content to afford

the honour, we must be content to endure the labour. And so in that point, as our incumbency upon a church, is our marriage to that church, we shall as far, as the occasion admits, see what marriage includes, and what it excludes; what it requires, what it forbids. It is a marriage, and a marriage after the death of another: *If one die*, says the text; howsoever the Roman church in the exercise of their tyranny, have forbidden churchmen to marry, then when they have orders, and forbidden orders to be given to any, who have formerly been married, if they married widows, God is pleased here, to afford us, some intimation, some adumbration, a typical and exemplar knowledge of the lawfulness of such marriages, he marries after the death of a former husband; and then farther, a brother marries the wife of his deceased brother; now into the reasons of the law, literally given, and literally accepted, we look not; it is enough, that God hath a care of the preservation of names and families and inheritances in those distinctions, and in those tribes, where he laid them then; but for the accommodation of the law to our present application, it must be a brother, a spiritual brother, a professor of the same faith, that succeeds in this marriage, in this possession, and this government of that widow church. It must be a brother, and *frater cohabitans*, says our text, a brother that dwelt together, with the former husband; he must be of the same household of the faithful, as well as profess the same faith; he must dwell in the house of God, not separate himself, or encourage others to do so, for matter of ceremonies, and discipline; idolaters must not, separatists must not be admitted to these marriages, to these widow churches. And then it is a surrendering to a brother dead without children: in this spiritual procreation of children, we all die without children of our own; though by our labours, when God blesses them, you become children, yet you are God's children, not ours; we nurse you by his word, but his Spirit begets you by the same word; we must not challenge to us, that which God only can do. And then being thus married to this widow, taking the charge of this church, he must, says our text, *perform the duty of a husband's brother*. He must, it is a personal service, not to be done always by proxy, and delegates; he must; and he must perform; not begin well,

and not persist, commence and not consummate, but perform the work; and perform the work, as it is a duty; it is a mere mercy in God, to send us to you, but it is a duty in us, to do that which we are sent for, by his word, and his sacraments, to establish you in his holy obedience, and his rich, and honourable service. And then our duty consists in both these, that we behave ourselves, as your husband, which implies a power, an authority; but a power and authority rooted in love, and exercised with love; and then that we do all as brothers to the former husband, that as one intentation of this law was, that inheritances, and temporal proprieties might be preserved, so our care might be through predecessor, and successor, and all, that all rights might be preserved to all men, that nothing not due, or due only in rigour, be extorted from the people, nothing that is in truth, or in equity due, be withheld from the minister; but that the true right of people, and pastor, and patron be preserved, to the preservation of love, and peace, and good opinion of one another.

First then, that which we take upon us, is a marriage. Amongst the Jews, it was almost an ignominious, an infamous thing, to die unmarried, at least to die without children, being married. Amongst the Gentiles it was so too, all well-governed states ever enlarged themselves, in giving places of command and profit, to married men. Indeed such men are most properly said to keep this world in reparations, that provide a succession of children; and for the next world, though all that are born into this world, do not enter into the number of God's saints, in heaven, yet the saints of heaven can be made out of no other materials, but men born into this world. Every stone in the quarry is not sure to be employed in the building of the church, but the church must be built out of those stones; and therefore they keep this world, they keep heaven itself in reparation, that marry in the fear of God, and in the same fear bring up the children of such a marriage. But I press not this too literally, nor over persuasively, that every man is bound to marry; God is no accepter of persons, nor of conditions. But being to use these words in their figurative application, I say, every man is bound to marry himself to a profession, to a calling: God hath brought him from being nothing, by creating him, but he resolves himself into

nothing again, if he take no calling upon him. In our baptism we make our contract with God, that we will believe all those articles there recited; there is our contract with him; and then, pursuing this contract, in the other sacrament, when we take his body and his blood, we are married to him. So at the same time, at our baptism, we make a contract in the presence of God, and his congregation, with the world; that we will forsake the covetous desires of the world, that is, the covetous proprieting of all things to ourselves, the covetous living only for ourselves, there is our contract with the world, that we will mutually assist, and serve our brethren in the world; and then, when we take particular callings, by which we are enabled to perform that former contract, then we are married to the world; so every man is duly contracted to the world, in baptism, and lawfully married to the world in accepting a profession. And so this service of ours to the church is our marriage.

Now in a matrimonial state, there is *onus* and *honos*, a burden to be borne, an honour to be received. The burden of the sins of the whole world, was a burden only for Christ's shoulders; but the sins of this parish, will lie upon my shoulders, if I be silent, or if I be indulgent, and denounce not God's judgment upon those sins. It will be a burden to us, if we do not, and God knows it is a burden to us, when we do denounce those judgments. Esay felt, and groaned under this burden, when he cried *Onus Babylonis*, *onus Moab*, and *onus Damasci*, *O the burden of Babylon*, and the *burden of Damascus*, and so the other prophets groan often under this burden, in contemplation of other places: it burdened, it troubled, it grieved the holy prophets of God, that they must denounce God's judgments, though upon God's enemies. We read of a compassionate general, that looking upon his great army, from a hill, fell into a bitter weeping, upon this consideration, that in fifty or sixty years hence, there will not be a man of these that fight now, alive upon the earth. What sea could furnish mine eyes with tears enough, to pour out, if I should think, that of all this congregation, which looks me in the face now, I should not meet one, at the resurrection, at the right hand of God! And for so much as concerns me, it is all one, if none of you be saved, as if none

of you be saved by my help, my means, my assistance, my preaching. If I put you upon miraculous ways, to be saved without hearing, or upon extraordinary ways to be saved by hearing others, this shall aggravate my condemnation, though you be saved: how much more heavy must my burden be, if by my negligence both I and you perish too! So then this calling, this marriage, is a burden every way. When at any midnight I hear a bell toll from this steeple, must not I say to myself, what have I done at any time for the instructing or rectifying of that man's conscience, who lieth there now ready to deliver up his own account, and my account to Almighty God? If he be not able to make a good account, he and I are in danger, because I have not enabled him; and though he be for himself able, that delivers not me, if I have been no instrument for the doing of it. Many, many burdens lie upon this calling, upon this marriage; but our recompence is, that marriage is as well an honourable as a painful calling.

If I be a Father, where is mine honour[1], saith God: if you can answer God, Why, you have it in your prophets, they have it, that satisfieth him, that dischargeth you. For, he that receiveth them, receiveth him: but if Christ, who repeats that complaint, in every one of the four evangelists, find it repeated in every one of his prophets too, in every one of us, That *a prophet hath no honour in his own country*, that a pastor is least respected of his own flock, you have not your *quietus est*, for the honour due to God; God never discharges the honour due to him, if it be not paid into their hands, whom he sendeth for it, to them upon whom he hath directed it. Would the king believe that man, to honour him, that violateth his image, or that calumniateth his ambassador? Every man is the image of God; every creature is the ambassador of God; the heavens, (and as well as the heavens, the earth) declare the glory of God; but the civil magistrate, and the spiritual pastor, who have married the two daughters of God, the state and the church, are the images and ambassadors of God, in a higher and more peculiar sense, and for that marriage are to be honoured. And then honour implieth that, by which honour subsisteth, maintenance; and they which withdraw that inju-

[1] Malachi i. 6.

riously, or withhold that contentiously, dishonour God, in the dishonour of his servants, and so make this marriage, this calling only burdensome and not honourable.

So then the interest of your particular minister, and the particular church, being such as between man and wife, a marriage, we consider the uses of marriage in God's first intention, and apply them to this marriage. God's first intentions in marriage were two. *In adjutorium*, for mutual helpers, and *in prolem*, for procreation, and education of children. For both these are we made husbands of churches; *in prolem*, to assist in the regeneration of children, for the inheritance of heaven; and *in adjutorium*, to be helpers to one another. And therefore if the husband, the pastor, put the wife, his flock in a circumcision, to pare themselves to the quick, to take from their necessary means to sustain their families, to satisfy him; the wife will say, as Zipporah said to Moses, *Sponsus sanguinum, A bloody husband art thou*, that exactest and extortest more than is due, in that case the husband is no helper. But if we be always ready to help your children over the threshold, (as St. Augustine calls baptism, *Limen ecclesiæ*) always ready to baptize the children; if we be always ready to help you in all your spiritual diseases, to that cordial, that balsamum, the body and blood of Christ Jesus; if we be always ready to help you in all your bodily distresses, ready even at your last gasp to open your eyes then, when your best friends are ready to close them; ready to deliver your souls into the hands of God, when all the rest about you are ready to receive into their hands, that which you leave behind you, and then ready to lay up the garments of your souls, your bodies, in the wardrobe the grave, till you call for them, and put them on again, in the resurrection, then are we truly helpers, true husbands; and then if the wife will say, as Job's wife to the husband, *Curse God and die*, be sorry, that thou hast taken this profession upon thee, and live in penury, and die in poverty. In a word, if he press too much, if she withdraw too much, this frustrates God's purpose in making that a marriage; they are not mutual helpers to one another. These were God's two principal intentions in marriage, *in adjutorium, in prolem*. But then man's fall induced a third, *in remedium*, that for a remedy against

burning, and to avoid fornication, every man should have his own wife, every woman her own husband. And so *in remedium*, for a remedy against spiritual fornication, of running after other men in other places, out of disaffection to their own pastor, or over affecting another, God hath given every wife, her own husband, every church her own pastor. And to all these purposes, our function is a marriage.

It is a marriage, it deserves the honour, it undertakes the burden of that state; and then it is a marriage of a widow, of a church left in widowhood by the death of her former husband. In the law literally God forbad the high priest to marry a widow[3]. The Roman church continues that literally, and more; they extend it; that which was in figure, enjoined to the high priest only, they in fact extend to all priests; no man that ever married a widow, may be a priest, though she be dead, when he desires orders. There is no question but there is a more exemplary sanctity required in the priest, than in other persons, and more in those, who are in high places in the church, than in those of inferior jurisdictions, and the name and title of virginity, hath ever been exhibited as an emblem, as a type of especial sanctity. And as such the apostle uses it when he saith, *That he would present the church of Corinth, as a chaste virgin to Christ*[2]*;* that is, as chaste as a virgin, though married, for so he saith in the words immediately before, *that he had espoused them to a husband:* as marriage is an honourable state, though in poverty, so is the bed undefiled with strange lust, a chaste bed even in marriage. And in the accommodation of the figure to the present occasion, our marriage to several churches, if we might marry no widows, (no churches, which had been wives to former husbands) we should find few virgins, that is, churches newly erected for us. But when the wife of a former husband is left a widow, *Nubat in Domino*, saith the apostle, In God's name let her marry[4].

But the former husband must be dead: the husband's absence makes not the wife a widow; nor doth the necessary, and lawful absence of the pastor, make the church vacant. The sickness of

[3] Levit. xxi. 13. [2] 2 Cor. xi. 2. [4] 1 Cor. vii. 39.

the husband makes not a widow; the bodily weakness, nay the spiritual weakness of the pastor in case that his parts and abilities, and faculties, be grown but weak, do not make his church vacant. If the pastor be suspended, or otherwise censured, this is but as a separation, or as a divorce; and as the wife is not a widow, upon a divorce, so neither is the church vacant, upon such censures. And therefore for them that take advantages upon the weaknesses, or upon the disgrace, or upon the poverty of any such incumbent, and so insinuate themselves into his church, this is intrusion, this is spiritual adultery, for the husband is not dead, though he be sick. Nay if they would remove him by way of preferment, yet that is a supplantation; when Jacob had Esau by the heel, whether he kept him in[5], till he might be strong enough to go out before him, or whether he pushed him out, before he would have gone, Jacob was a supplanter. Some few cases are put when a wife becomes as a widow, her husband living; but regularly it is by death. In some few cases, churches may otherwise be vacant, but regularly it is by death. And then *Esto vidua in domo patris*, saith Judah to Thamar, *Remain a widow at thy father's house*[6]: then the church remaineth in the house, in the hands of her father, the bishop of that diocese, till a new husband be lawfully tendered unto her: and till that time, as our Saviour Christ recommended his most blessed mother, to St. John, but not as a wife, so that bishop delivers that church, to the care and administration of some other during her widowhood, till by due course she become the wife of another.

Thus our calling is a marriage; it should have honour; it must have labour; and it is a lawful marriage upon a just and equitable vacancy of the place, without any supplantation; upon death; and then it is upon death of a brother; *If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife*, &c. As well St. Gregory, as St. Augustine before, interpret this of our elder, our eldest brother Christ Jesus. That he being dead, we marry his wife, the church, and become husbands to her. But Christ, in that capacity, as he is head of the church, cannot die. That to which, the application of this law, leads us, is, that predecessor, and successor, be brethren of the same faith, and the

[5] Gen. xxv. 26. [6] Gen. xxxviii. 11.

same profession of faith. The Sadducees put a case to Christ of a woman married successively to seven men: let seven signify infinite; still those seven were brethren. How often soever any wife change her husband, any church, her pastor, God sends us still a succession of brethren, sincere, and unfeigned preachers of the same truth, sons of the same Father; Who is that Father? God is our Father; *Have we not all one Father*[7]? says the prophet. Yes, we have, and so a worm, and we, are brethren, by the same father, and mother, the same God, the same earth. *Hath not the rain a Father*[8]? The rain hath; and the same that we have. More narrowly, and yet very largely, Christ is our Father; one of his names is, *The everlasting Father*[9]; and then after these, after God, after Christ, the king is our father; See, *my father, the skirt of thy robe, in my hand*[10], says David to his king Saul; now if any husband should be offered to any widow, any pastor to any vacant church, who were not our brother by all these fathers, in a right belief in God, the Father of all men, in a right profession of Christ Jesus, the Father of all Christians, in a right affection, and allegiance to the king, the father of all subjects, any that should incline to a foreign father, an imaginary universal father, he of whom his vice-fathers, his junior fathers, the jesuit[11] (for all the jesuits are fathers) says, That the fathers of the church are but sons, and not fathers, to him; they that say to a stock, to the image of the beast, *Thou art my father*[12], who, (not in a sense of humiliation, as Job speaks the words[13]) but of pride, say to corruption, *Thou art my father*, that is, that prostrate themselves to all the corruptions of a prostitute church: if any so inclined of himself, or so inclinable if occasion should invite him, or rather tempt him, be offered for a husband to any widow, for a pastor to any vacant church, he is not within the accommodation of this law, he is not our brother, by the whole blood, who hath not a brotherhood rooted in the same religion, and in the allegiance to the same sovereign.

He must be a brother, and *frater cohabitans*, a brother dwelling with the former brother. As he is a brother, we consider the unity of faith: as he dwells in the same house, we consider the

[7] Matt. ii. 10. [8] Job xxxviii. 28. [9] Isaiah ix. 6. [10] 1 Sam. xxiv. 11.
[11] Bellarmine. [12] Jer. ii. 27. [13] Job xvii. 14.

unity of discipline; that as he believes, and professes the same articles of faith, so by his own obedience, and by his instructing of others, he establish the same government; a schismatic is no more a brother to this purpose, than a heretic. If we look well, we shall see, that Christ provided better for his garments, than for his flesh; he suffered his flesh to be torn, but not his seamless garment. There may be, in many cases, more mischief, in disobeying the uniformity of the discipline of the church, than in mistaking in opinion, some doctrine of the church. We see in God's institution of his first church, whom he called *brethren:* those who were instructed, and *cunning in the songs of the church*, they are called *brethren*[14]; to oppose the orders of the church solemnly ordained, or customarily admitted, for the advancement of God's glory, and the devotion of the congregation, forfeits this brotherhood, or at least discontinues the purpose and use of it; for, howsoever they may be in a kind, brothers, if they succeed in the profession of the same faith, yet we see where the blessedness is settled, *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house*[15]; and we see, where the goodness, and the pleasantness is settled, *Behold, how good, and how pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity*[16]: so that, if they be not brothers in the same faith, and brothers in the same household of the faithful, and brothers in the same allegiance, if they advance not the truth of the church, and the peace of the church, and the head of the church, fomenters of error, and of schism, and sedition, are not husbands for these widows, pastors for these churches.

He must be a brother; a brother dwelling in the same house of Christ, and then brother to one dead without children, as Tertullian expresses it in his particular elegancy, *illiberis;* that is, content to be his brother, in that sense, in that capacity, to claim no children, no spiritual children of his own begetting; not to attribute to himself that holy generation of the saints of God, as though his learning, or his wit, or his labour, had saved them; but to content himself to have been the foster-father, and to have nursed those children, whom the Spirit of God, by over-shadowing the church, hath begot upon her, for, though it be with the word

[14] 1 Chron. v. 27. [15] Psalm lxxxiv. 4. [16] Psalm cxxxiii. 1.

of truth, in our preaching, yet of *his own will begot he us*, though *by the word*, says the apostle[17]. St. Paul might say to the Corinthians, *Though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel*[18]; and he might say of his spiritual son Onesimus, *That he begot him in his bonds*[19]; those, to whom he first of any presented the Gospel, that had not heard of a Christ, nor a Holy Ghost, before they, into whom, he infused a new religion, new to them, might well enough be called his children, and he their father; but we have no new doctrine to present, no new opinion to infuse, or miracles to amaze, as in the Roman church, they are full of all these: we have no children to beget of our own: *Paul was not crucified for you, nor were you baptized in the name of Paul*, says Paul himself[20]; as he says again, *Who is Paul? but a minister by whom ye believed*[21], and that also not by him, but *as the Lord gave to every man;* not as Paul preached to every man, for he preached alike to every man; but as the Lord gave to every man; *I have planted*, says he, it is true, but *he that planteth is nothing*, says he also; only they that proceed, as they proceed in the Roman church *ex opere operato*, to tie the grace of God, to the action of the man, will venture to call God's children, their children in that sense. My prayer shall be against that commination, that God will not *give us a miscarrying womb*, nor *dry breasts*[22]; that you may always suck pure milk from us, and then not cast it up, but digest it, to your spiritual growth; and I shall call upon God with a holy passion, as vehement as Rachel's to Jacob, *Da mihi liberos, Give me children, or I die*[23]: That God would give me children, but his children; that he by his Spirit, may give you an inward regeneration, as I, by his ordinance shall present to you, the outward means, that so being begot by himself, the Father of life, and of light, you may be nursed, and brought up, in his service by me. That so, not attributing the work to any man, but to God's ordinances, you do not tie the power of God, nor the breath of life, to any one man's lips, as though there were no regeneration, no begetting, but by him; but acknowledging the other to be but an instrument, and the weakest to be that, you may

[17] James i. 18. [18] 1 Cor. iv. 15. [19] Phil. 10. [20] 1 Cor. i. 13.
[21] 1 Cor. iii. 5. [22] Hosea ix. 14. [23] Gen. xxx. 1

remember also, that though a man can cut deeper with an axe, than with a knife, with a heavy, than with a lighter instrument; yet God can pierce as far into a conscience, by a plain, as by an exquisite speaker.

Now this widow being thus married, this church thus undertaken, he must perform the duty of a husband's brother: first, it is a personal office, he must do it himself. When Christ shall say, at the judgment, *I was naked, and ye clothed me not, sick, and ye visited me not*, it shall be no excuse to say, *When saw we thee naked, when saw we thee sick*[24]? for we might have seen it, we should have seen it. When we shall come to our account, and see them, whose salvation was committed to us, perish, because they were uninstructed, and ignorant, dare we say then, We never saw them, show their ignorance, we never heard of it? That is the greatest part of our fault, the heaviest weight upon our condemnation, that we saw so little, heard so little, conversed so little amongst them, because we were made watchmen, and bound to see, and bound to hear, and bound to be heard; not by others, but by ourselves; my sheep may be saved by others; but I save them not, that are saved so, nor shall I myself be saved by their labour, where mine was necessarily required.

The office is personal, I must do it, and it is perpetual, I must perform it, says the text, go through with it. Lot's wife looked back, and God never gave her leave to look forward again. *That man who hath put his hand to the plough*, and *looks back*[25], Christ disables him for the kingdom of God. The Galatians who had begun in the spirit, and then relapsed, before *whose eyes Christ Jesus had been evidently set forth*[26], as the apostle speaks, fall under that reproach of the apostle, to be called, and called again, fools, and men bewitched. If I begin to preach, amongst you, and proceed not, I shall fall under that heavy increpation from my God, You began, that you might for your own glory, show that you were in some measure, able to serve the church, and when you had done enough for your own glory, you gave over my glory, and the salvation of their souls, to whom I sent you. God hath set our eyes in our foreheads, to look forward, not backward, not to

[24] Matt. xxv. 43. [25] Luke ix. 62. [26] Gal. iii. 3.

be proud of that which we have done, but diligent in that which we are to do. In the creation, if God had given over his work, the third, or fifth day, where had man been? If I give over my prayers, due to the church of God, as long as God enables me to do it service, I lose my thanks, nay, I lose the testimony of mine own conscience for all. My office is personal, and it is perpetual, and then it is a duty. He must perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her.

It is not of courtesy, that we preach, but it is a duty, it is not a bounty given, but it is a debt paid: for, *Though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for a necessity is laid upon me*, says St. Paul himself[27]. It is true, that as there is a *Væ si non, Woe be unto me, if I do not preach the Gospel*, so there is an *Euge bone serve, Well done good and faithful servant*[28], to them that do. But the *væ*, is of justice, the *euge* is of mercy; if I do it not, I deserve condemnation from God; but if I do it, I deserve not thanks from him. Nay, it is a debt, not only to God, but to God's people, to you: and indeed there is more due to you, than you can claim, or can take knowledge of. For the people can claim but according to the laws of that state, and the canons of that church, in which God hath placed them; such preaching, as those laws, and those canons enjoin, is a debt which they can call for: but the pastor himself hath another court, another bar in himself, by which he tries himself, and must condemn himself, if he pay not this debt, perform not this duty, as often, as himself, knows himself, to be fit, and able to do it.

It is a duty, and it is the duty of a husband's brother. Now the husband hath power, and authority over the wife. *The head of the woman is the man*[29]; and when the office of this spiritual husband is particularly expressed, thus, *reprove, rebuke, exhort*[30], you see, for one word of familiarity, that is, exhort, there are two of authority, reprove, and rebuke. But yet, all the authority of the husband, secular, or ecclesiastical, temporal, or spiritual husband, is grounded, rooted in love: for, the apostle seems to delight himself, in the repeating of that commandment, to the Ephesians, and to the Colossians, *Husbands love your wives*. Moses extends

[27] 1 Cor. ix. 16.
[28] Matt. xxv. 21.
[29] 1 Cor. xi. 3.
[30] 2 Tim. iv. 3.

himself no farther, in expressing all the happinesses, that Isaac and Rebecca enjoyed in one another, but this, *she became his wife, and he loved her.* If she had not been his wife, Moses would never have proposed that love for an example; for so it is also between Elkanah, and his wife Hannah, (1 Sam. i. 5.) *Unto Hannah he gave a double portion, for* (says the text) *he loved Hannah*[31]. If the pastor love, there will be a double labour; if the people love, there will be double respect. But being so, he thought he said all, when he said they loved one another; for where the congregation loves the pastor, he will forbear bitter reproofs, and wounding increpations, and where the pastor loves his congregation, his rebukes, because they proceed out of love, will be acceptable, and well interpreted by them.

It is a duty, and personal, and perpetual; a duty, of a husband, and lastly, of a husband that is brother to the former husband; in which last circumstance, we have time to mark but this one note, that the reason of that law, which drew the brother to this marriage, was the preservation of the temporal inheritance, in that family. Even in our spiritual marriages to widow churches, we must have a care to preserve the temporal rights of all persons; that the parish be not oppressed with heavy extortions, nor the pastor defrauded with unjust subtraction, nor the patron damnified by usurpations, nor the ordinary neglected by disobediences; but that people, and pastor, and patron, and ordinary, continuing in possession of their several rights, love being the root of all, the fruit of all may be peace, love being the soul of all, the body of all may be unity; which the Lord of unity, and concord, grant to us all, for his Son Christ Jesus' sake, *Amen.*

[31] 1 Sam. i. 5.

SERMON CXXVII.

THE SECOND SERMON PREACHED BY THE AUTHOR AFTER HE CAME TO ST. DUNSTAN'S, 25TH *APRIL,* 1624.

PSALM XXXIV. 11.

Come ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

THE text does not call children simply, literally, but such men, and women, as are willing to come in the simplicity of children; such children, as Christ spoke of, *Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*[1]; *Come ye children;* come such children. Nor does the text call such as come, and would fain be gone again; it is come and hearken; not such as wish themselves away, nor such as wish another man here; but such as value God's ordinance of preaching, though it be, as the apostle says, but *the foolishness of preaching*[2], and such, as consider the office, and not the person, how mean soever; *Come ye children;* and, when ye are come, hearken, and, though it be but I, *hearken unto me; and, I will teach you the fear of the Lord;* the most noble, the most courageous, the most magnanimous, not affection, but virtue, in the world; *Come ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*

To every minister and dispenser of the Word of God, and to every congregation belong these words; and therefore we will divide the text between us; to you one, to us appertains the other part. You must come, and you must hearken; we must teach, and teach to edification; there is the *meum et tuum*, your part, and our part. From each part, these branches flow out naturally; in yours, first, the capacity, as children; then the action, you come; then your disposition here, you hearken; and lastly, your submission to God's ordinance, you hearken even unto me, unto any minister of his sending. In our part, there is first a teaching; for, else, why should you come, or hearken unto me, or any? It is a teaching, it is not only a praying; and then, there is a catholic doctrine, a circular doctrine, that walks the round, and

[1] Matt. xviii. 3. [2] 1 Cor. i. 21.

goes the compass of our whole lives, from our first, to our last childhood, when age hath made us children again, and it is the art of arts, the root, and fruit of all true wisdom, *The true fear of the Lord. Come ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*

First then, the word, in which, in the first branch of the first part, your capacity is expressed, *filii, pueri, children*, is, from the original, which is *banim*, often accepted in three notions, and so rendered; three ways, men are called children, out of that word *banim*, in the Scriptures. Either it is *servi, servants;* for, they are *filii familiares;* as the master is *pater familias*, father of the family, (and that he is, though there be no natural children in the family) the servants are children of the family, and are very often in Scriptures called so, *pueri, children;* or it is *alumni*, nurse-children, foster-children, *filii mammillares*, children of the breasts; whether we minister to them, temporal or spiritual nourishment, they are children; or else it is *filii viscerales*, children of our bowels, our natural children. And in all these three capacities, as servants, as sucking children, as sons, are you called upon in this appellation, in this compellation, children.

First, as you are servants, you are children; for, without distinction of age, servants are called so, frequently, ordinarily, in the Scriptures, *pueri*. The priest asks David, before he would give him the holy bread, *An vasa puerorum sancta, Whether those children*, (speaking of David's followers) *were clean from women*[3]; here were children that were able to get children. Nay, David's soldiers are often called so, *pueri*, children. In the first of the Kings[4], he takes a muster, *recenset pueros;* here were children that were able to kill men. You are his children, (of what age soever) as you are his servants; and in that capacity he calls you. You are unprofitable servants; but it is not an unprofitable service, to serve God; he can get nothing by you, but you can have nothing without him. The centurion's servants came, when he said, Come; and was their wages like yours? Had they their being, their everlasting well-being for their service? You will scarce receive a servant, that is come from another man, without testimony; if you put yourselves out

[3] 1 Sam. xxi. 5. [4] 1 Kings xx. 15.

of God's service, whither will ye go? In his service, and his only, is perfect freedom. And therefore as you love freedom, and liberty, be his servants; and call the freedom of the Gospel, the best freedom, and come to the preaching of that.

He calls you children, as you are servants, (*filii familiares*) and he calls you children, as you are *alumni*, nurse-children, *filii mammillares*, as he requires the humility, and simplicity of little children in you. For, *Cum simplicibus sermocinatio ejus*, (as the Vulgate reads that place) *God's secret discourse is with the single heart*[5]. The first that ever came to Christ, (so as he came to us, in blood) they that came to him so, before he came so to us, that died for him, before he died for them, were such sucking children, those whom Herod slew. As Christ thought himself bound to thank his Father, for that way of proceeding, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast revealed these things unto babes*[6]; so Christ himself pursues the same way, *Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven*[7]. Of such; not only of those who were truly, literally children, (children in age) but of such as those, (*talium est regnum cœlorum*) such as come in such a disposition, in the humility, in the simplicity, in the singleness of heart, as children do. An habitual sinner is always in minority, always an infant; an infant to this purpose, all his acts, all the bands of an infant, are void; all the outward religious actions, even the band and contract of baptism in an habitual sinner is void, and ineffectual. He that is in the house, and favour of God, though he be a child, (a child to this purpose, simple, supple, tractable, single-hearted) is, as Adam was in the state of innocency, a man the first minute, able to stand upright in the sight of God. And out of one place of Esay, our expositors have drawn, conveniently enough, both these conclusions; *A child shall die a hundred years old*, says the prophet[8]; that is, (say some) a sinner though he live a hundred years, yet he dies a child, in ignorance; and then, (say others, and both truly) He that comes willingly, when God calls, though he die a child in age, he hath the wisdom of a hundred years upon him.

[5] Prov. iii. 32. [6] Matt. xi. 25.
[7] Matt. xix. 14. [8] Isaiah LXV. 20.

There is not a graver thing, than to be such a child; to conform his will to the will of God. Whether you consider temporal or spiritual things, you are God's children. For, for temporal, if God should take off his hand, withdraw his hand of sustentation, all those things, which assist us temporally, would relapse to the first feeble, and childish estate, and come to their first nothing. Armies would be but hospitals, without all strength; council-tables but bedlams, without all sense; and schools and universities, but the wrangling of children, if God, and his Spirit did not inanimate our schools, and armies, and councils. His adoption makes us men, therefore, because it makes us his children. But we are his children in this consideration especially, as we are his spiritual children, as he hath nursed us, fed us with his word. In which sense, the apostle speaks of those who had embraced the true religion, (in the same words that the prophet had spoken before) *Behold, I, and the children that God hath given me*[9]; and in the same sense, the same prophet, in the same place, says of them who had fallen away from the true religion, *They please themselves in the children of strangers*[10], in those men, who have derived their orders, and their doctrine from a foreign jurisdiction. In that state where adoptions were so frequent, (in old Rome) a plebeian could not adopt a patrician, a yeoman could not adopt a gentleman, nor a young man could not adopt an old. In the new Rome, that endeavours to adopt all, in an imaginary filiation, you that have the perfect freedom of God's service, be not adopted into the slavery, and bondage of men's traditions; you that are in possession of the ancient religion, of Christ, and his apostles, be not adopted into a younger religion. *Religio à religando;* That is religion, that binds; that binds, that is necessary to salvation. That which we affirm, our adversaries deny not; that which we profess, they confess was always necessary to salvation. They will not say, that all that they say now, was always necessary; that a man could not be saved without believing the articles of the Council of Trent, a week before that council shut up. You are his children, as children are servants; and, *if he be your Lord, where is his fear?* You are his children,

[9] Heb. ii. 13. [10] Isaiah ii. 6.

as he hath nursed you, with the milk of his word; and *if he be your Father* so, (your foster-father) *where is his love*[11]?

But he is your Father otherwise; you are not only *filii familiares*, children because servants, nor only *filii mammillares*, children because nursed by him, but you are also *filii viscerales*, children of his bowels. For, we are otherwise allied to Christ, than we can be to any of his instruments, though angels of the church, prophets, or apostles; and yet, his apostle says, of one whom he loved, of Onesimus, *Receive him, that is, mine own bowels; my Son*, says he, *whom I have begotten in my bands*[12]. How much more art thou bound to receive and refresh those bowels from which thou art derived, Christ Jesus himself; receive him, refresh him. Carry that, which the wise man hath said, *Miserere animæ tuæ*, Be merciful to thine own soul, higher than so; and *Miserere Salvatoris tui*, Have mercy upon thine own Saviour, *put on the bowels of mercy*[13], and put them on even towards Christ Jesus himself, who needs thy mercy, by being so torn, and mangled, and embowelled, by blasphemous oaths, and execrations. For, beloved, it is not so absurd a prayer, as it is conceived, if Luther did say upon his death-bed, *Oremus pro Domino nostro Jesu Christo, Let us pray for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. Had we not need pray for him? If he complain that Saul persecutes him, had we not need pray for him? It is a seditious affection in civil things, to divide the king and the kingdom; to pray, to fight for the one, and leave out the other, is seditiously done. If the kingdom of Christ need thy prayers, and thy assistance, Christ needs it; if the body need it, the head needs it; if thou must pray for his Gospel, thou must pray for him; nay, thou canst not pray for thyself, but thou must pray for him, for, thou art his bowels; when thou in thy forefathers, the first Christians in the primitive church, wast persecuted, Christ cried out, *Why persecutest thou me?* Christ made thy case his, because thou wast of his bowels. When Christ is disseised, and dispossessed, his truth profligated, and thrown out of a nation, that professed it before, when Christ is wounded by the blasphemies of others, and crucified by thee, in thy relapses to repented sins,

[11] Mal. i. 6. [12] Philem. 12. [13] Colos. iii. 12.

wilt thou not say to them, to thyself, in the behalf of Christ, Why persecute ye me? Wilt thou not make Christ's case thine, as he made thine his? Art not thou the bowels of Christ? If not, (and thou art not, if thou have not this sense of his suffering) thou hast no interest in his death, by thy baptism, nor in his resurrection, by thy feeble half repentances. But in the duty of a child, as thou art a servant, in the simplicity of a child, as thou hast sucked from him, in the interest and inheritance of a child, as thou art the son of his bowels, in all these capacities, (and with all these we have done) God calls thee, Come ye children; and that is our next step, the action, Come.

Passing thus from the persons to the action, *venite, come*, we must ask first, what this coming is? The whole mystery of our redemption is expressed by the apostle in this word, *venit, that Christ Jesus is come into the world*[14]. All that thou hast to do, is to come to, and to meet him. Where is he? At home; in his own house, in the church. Which is his house, which is his church? That to thee, in which he hath given thee thy baptism, if that do still afford thee, as much as is necessary for thy salvation. Come thither, to the participation of his ordinances, to the exercises of religion there. The gates of heaven shall be opened to you, at last in that word, *venite benedicti, come ye blessed*, the way to those gates is opened to you now, in the same word, *venite filii*, come ye children, come. Christ can come, and does often, into thy bed-chamber, in the visitation of his private Spirit, but, here, he calls thee out into the congregation, into the communion of saints. And then the church celebrates Christ's coming in the flesh, a month before he comes, in four Sundays of Advent, before Christmas. When thou comest to meet him in the congregation, come not occasionally, come not casually, not indifferently, not collaterally; come not as to an entertainment, a show, a spectacle, or company, come solemnly, with preparation, with meditation. He shall have the less profit, by the prayer of the congregation, that hath not been at his private prayer before he came. Much of the mystery of our religion lay in the *venturus*, that Christ was to come, all that the law and prophets undertook for, was that *venturus*, that Christ was to come; but

[14] 1 Tim. i. 15.

the consummation of all, the end of the law and the prophets, is in the *venit*, he is come. Do not clog thy coming with future conditions, and contingencies, thou wilt come, if thou canst wake, if thou canst rise, if thou canst be ready, if thou like the company, the weather, the man. We find one man who was brought in his bed to Christ[15]; but it was but one. Come, come actually, come earnestly, come early, come often; and come to meet him, Christ Jesus and nobody else. Christ is come into the world; and therefore thou needest not go out of the world to meet him; he doth not call thee from thy calling, but in thy calling. The dove went up and down, from the ark, and to the ark[16], and yet was not disappointed of her olive-leaf, thou mayest come to this place at due times, and mayest do the businesses of the world, in other places too, and still keep thy olive, thy peace of conscience. If no heretical recusancy, (thou dost like the doctrine) no schismatical recusancy, (thou dost like the discipline) no lazy recusancy, (thou forbearest not because thou canst not sit at thine ease) no proud recusancy, (that the company is not good enough for thee) if none of these detain thee, thou mayest be here, even when thou art not here; God may accept thy desire; as, in many cases, thou mayest be away, when thou art here; as, in particular thou art, if being here, thou do not hearken to that which is said here; for that is added to the coming, and follows in a third consideration, after the capacity, children, and the action, come, the disposition, hearken: come ye children and hearken.

Upon those words of David, *Conturbata sunt ossa mea*[17], St. Basil saith well, *Habet et anima ossa sua, The soul hath bones as well as the body.* And in this anatomy, and dissection of the soul, as the bones of the soul, are the constant and strong resolutions thereof, and as the seeing of the soul is understanding (*The eyes of your understanding being opened*[18]) so the hearing of the soul is hearkening; in these religious exercises, we do not hear, except we hearken; for hearkening is the hearing of the soul. Some men draw some reasons, out of some stories of some credit, to imprint a belief of ecstacy, and raptures; that the body remain-

[15] Matt. ix. 2. [16] Gen. viii. 11.
[17] Psalm vi. 3. [18] Ephes. i. 18.

ing upon the floor, or in the bed, the soul may be gone out to the contemplation of heavenly things. But it were a strange and a perverse ecstacy, that the body being here, at a religious exercise, and in a religious posture, the soul should be gone out to the contemplation, and pursuit of the pleasures or profits of this world. You come hither but to your own funerals, if you bring nothing hither but your bodies; you come but to be entered, to be laid in the earth, if the ends of your coming be earthly respects, praise, and opinion, and observation of men; you come to be canonized, to grow saints, if your souls be here, and by grace here always diffused, grow up to a sanctification. *Bonus es Domine animæ quærenti te*, Thou art good, O Lord, to that soul that seeks thee; it is St. Augustine's note, that it is put in the singular, *animæ*, to that soul: though many come, few come to him. A man may thread sermons by half-dozens a day, and place his merit in the number, a man may have been all day in the perfume and incense of preaching, and yet have received none of the savour of life unto life. Some things an ape can do as well as a man; some things an hypocrite as well as a saint. We cannot see now, whether thy soul be here now, or no; but, to-morrow, hereafter, in the course of thy life, they which are near thee, and know whether thy former faults be mended, or no, know whether thy soul used to be at sermons, as well as thy body used to go to sermons. Faith comes by hearing, saith the apostle; but it is by that hearing of the soul, hearkening, considering. And then, as the soul is infused by God, but diffused over the whole body, and so there is a man, so faith is infused from God, but diffused into our works, and so there is a saint. Practice is the incarnation of faith, faith is incorporated and manifested in a body, by works; and the way to both, is that hearing, which amounts to this hearkening, to a diligent, to a considerate, to a profitable hearing. In which, one essential circumstance is, that we be not over-affectionately transported with an opinion of any one person, but apply ourselves to the ordinance, Come, and hearken unto me, to any whom God sends with the seal and character of his minister, which is our fourth and last branch in your part.

David doth not determine this in his own person, that you should hearken to him, and none but him, but that you should

hearken to him in that capacity and qualification, which is common to him with others, as we are sent by God upon that ministry; that you say to all such, *Blessed art thou that comest in the name of the Lord.* St. Augustine, and not he alone, interprets this whole psalm of Christ, that it is a thanksgiving of Christ to his Father, upon some deliverance received in some of his agonies, some of his persecutions; and that Christ calleth us to hearken unto him. To him, so, as he is present with us, in the ministry of his church, he is a perverse servant, that will receive no commandment, except he have it immediately from his master's mouth; so is he too, that pretendeth to rest so wholly in the word of God, the Scriptures, as that he seeks no interpretation, no exposition, no preaching, all is in the Scriptures, but all the Scriptures are not always evident to all understandings. He also is a perverse servant, that will receive no commandment by any officer of his master's, except he like the man, or, if his master might, in his opinion, have chosen a fitter man, to serve in that place. And such a perverseness is in those hearers who more respect the man, than the ministry, and his manner of delivering it, than the message that he delivers. *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God*[19]. That is our classis, our rank, our station, what names soever we brought into the world by our extraction from this or that family, what name soever we took in our baptism, and contract between God and us, that name, in which we come to you, is that, *the ministers of Christ, the stewards of the mysteries of God, and so let men account of us*, says the apostle. Invention, and disposition, and art, and eloquence, and expression, and elocution, and reading, and writing, and printing, are secondary things, accessory things, auxiliary, subsidiary things; men may account us, and make account of us, as of orators in the pulpit, and of authors, in the shop; but if they account of us as of ministers and stewards, they give us our due; that is our name to you. All the evangelists mention John Baptist and his preaching; but two of the four say never a word of his austerity of life, his locusts, nor his camel's hair; and those two that do, Matthew and Mark, they insist, first, upon his calling, and then upon

[19] 1 Cor. iv. 1.

his actual preaching, how he pursued that calling, and then upon the doctrine that he preached, repentance, and sanctification, and after that, they come to these secondary and subsidiary things, which added to his estimation, and assisted the passage of his doctrine, his good life. Learning, and other good parts, and an exemplar life fall into second places; they have a first place, in their consideration who are to call them, but in you, to whom they are sent, but a second; fix you, in the first place, upon the calling. This calling circumcised Moses' uncircumcised lips[20]; this made Jeremy able to speak, though he called himself a child[21]; this is Esay's *coal from the altar, which takes away even his sin, and his iniquity*[22]. Be therefore content to pass over some infirmities, and rest yourselves upon the calling. And when you have thus taken the simplicity of children, (they are the persons, which was our first step) and are come to the congregation, (that is your action, and was our second) and have conformed yourselves to hearken, (that also is the disposition here, which was our third) and all this with a reverence to the calling before an affection to the man, (that is your submission to God's ordinance, and was our fourth and last step) you have then built our first part in yourselves, and laid together all those pieces which constitute your duty, *Come ye children, and hearken unto me;* and from hence we pass, to our duty, *I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*

In this second part, we made two steps; first, the manner, *Docebo, I will teach;* and then the matter, *Timorem Domini, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* Upon the first, we will stay no longer, but to confess, that we are bound to teach, and that this teaching is to preach; *Væ si non*, Woe be unto us, if we do not preach. Woe to them, who, out of ease, or state, silence themselves; and woe to them too, who by their distemper, and schismatical and seditious manner of preaching, occasion and force others to silence them; and think, (and think it out of a profitable, and manifold experience) that as forbidden books sell best, so silenced ministers thrive best. It is a duty, *docendum*, we must teach, preach; but a duty that excludes not catechizing;

[20] Exod. vi. 12. [21] Jer. i. 6. [22] Isaiah vi. 6.

for catechizing seems especially to be intended here, where he calls upon them who are to be taught, by that name children. It is a duty that excludes not praying; but praying excludes not it neither. Prayer and preaching may consist, nay they must meet in the church of God. Now, he that will teach, must have learnt before, many years before; and he that will preach, must have thought of it before, many days before. Extemporal ministers, that resolve in a day what they will be, extemporal preachers, that resolve in a minute, what they will say, outgo God's Spirit, and make too much haste. It was Christ's way; he took first disciples to learn, and then out of them, he took apostles to teach; and those apostles made more disciples. Though your first consideration be upon the calling, yet our consideration must be for our fitness to that calling. Our prophet David hath put them both together, well, *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth*[22]; (you see what was his university; Moses was his Aristotle; he had studied divinity from his youth) *and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works*, says he there. Hitherto? How long was that? It follows in the next verse, *Now am I old and gray-headed*, and yet he gave not over. Then God's work goes well forward, when they whom God hath taught, teach others. He that can say with David, *Docuisti me, O God thou hast taught me*, may say with him too, *Docebo vos, I will teach you.* But what? that remains only, *I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*

There is a fear, which needs no teaching, a fear that is naturally imprinted in us. We need not teach men to be sad, when a mischief is upon them, nor to fear when it is coming towards them; for, fear respects the future, so as sadness does the present; fear looks upon danger, and sadness upon detriment; fear upon a sick friend, and sadness upon a dead. And as these need not be taught us, because they are natural, so, because they are natural, they need not be untaught us, they need not be forbidden, nor dissuaded. Our Saviour Christ had them both, fear, and sadness; and that man lacks Christian wisdom, who is without a provident fear of future dangers, and without Christian charity, who is without a compassionate sadness in present calamities. Now this fear, though but imprinted in nature, is *timor*

[22] Psalm LXXI. 17.

Domini, the fear of the Lord, because the Lord is the Lord of nature, he is the Nature of nature, Lord of all endowments and impressions in nature. And therefore, though for this natural fear, you go no farther than nature, (for it is born with you, and it lives in you) yet the right use even of this natural fear, is from grace, though in the root it be a fear of nature, yet in the government thereof, in the degrees, and practice thereof, it is the fear of the Lord; not only as he is Lord of nature, (for so, you have the fear itself from the Lord) but as this natural fear produces good or bad effects, as it is regulated and ordered, or as it is deserted, and abandoned, by the Spirit of the Lord; and therefore you are called hither, Come, that you may learn the fear of the Lord, that is, the right use of natural fear, and natural affections, from the law of God; for, as it is a wretched condition, to be without natural affections, so is it a dangerous dereliction, if our natural affections be left to themselves, and not regulated, not inanimated by the Spirit of God; for then my sadness will sink into desperation, and my fear will betray the succours which reason offereth[24]. This I gain by letting in the fear of the Lord, into my natural fear; that whereas the natural object of my natural fear is *malum*, something that I apprehend *sub ratione mali*, as it is ill, ill for me, (for, if I did not conceive it to be ill, I would not fear it) yet when I come to thaw this ice, when I come to discuss this cloud, and attenuate this damp, by the light and heat of grace, and the illustration of the Spirit of God, breathing in his word, I change my object, or at least, I look upon it in another line, in another angle, I look not upon that evil which my natural fear presented me, of an affliction, or a calamity, but I look upon the glory that God receives by my Christian constancy in that affliction, and I look upon that everlasting blessedness, which I should have lost, if God had not laid that affliction upon me. So that though fear look upon evil, (for affliction is *malum pœnæ*, evil as it hath the nature of punishment) yet when the fear of the Lord is entered into my natural fear, my fear is more conversant, more exercised upon the contemplation of good, than evil, more upon the glory of God, and the joys of heaven, than upon the afflictions of this life, how malig-

[24] Wisdom xvii. 12.

nant, how manifold soever. And therefore, that this fear, and all your natural affections, (which seem weakness in man, and are so indeed, if they be left to themselves, now in our corrupt and depraved estate) may advance your salvation, (which is the end why God hath planted them in you) Come and learn the fear of the Lord, learn from the Word of God, explicated by his minister, in his ordinance upon occasions leading him thereunto, the limits of this natural fear, and where it may become sin, if it be not regulated, and inanimated by a better fear, than itself.

There is a fear, which grows out of a second nature, custom, and so is half-natural, to those men that have it. The custom of the place we live in, or of the times we live in, or of the company we live in. Topical customs of such a place, chronical customs of such an age, personal customs of such a company. The time, or the place, or the persons in power have advanced, and drawn into fashion and reputation, some vices, and such men as depend upon them, are afraid, not to concur with them in their vices; for, amongst persons, and in times, and places, that are vicious, an honest man is a rebel; he goes against that state, and that government, which is the kingdom of sin. Amongst drunkards, a sober man is a spy upon them; amongst blasphemers, a prayer is a libel against them; and amongst dissolute and luxurious persons, a chaste man is a bridewell, his person, his presence is a house of correction. In vicious times and companies, a good man is unacceptable, and cannot prosper. And, because as amongst merchants, men trade half upon stock, and half upon credit, so, in all other courses, because men rise according to the opinion and estimation which persons in power have of them, as well as by real goodness, therefore to build up, or to keep up this opinion and estimation in them upon whom they depend, they are afraid to cross the vices of the time, so far, as by being virtuous in their own particular. They are afraid it will be called a singularity, and a schismatical and seditious disposition, and taken for a reproach, and a rebuke laid upon their betters, if they be not content to be as ill, as those their betters are. Now, the fear of the Lord brings the *quo warranto* against all these privileged sins, and privileged places, and persons, and overthrows all these customs, and prescriptions. The fear of the Lord is not a topical,

not a chronical, not a personal, but a catholic, a canonical, a circular, an universal fear; it goes through all, and over all; and when this half-natural fear, this fear grown out of custom, suggests to me, that if I be thus tender conscienced, if I startle at an oath, if I be sick at a health, if I cannot conform myself to the vices of my betters, I shall lose my master, my patron, my benefactor, this fear of the Lord enters, and presents the infallible loss of a far greater master, and patron, and benefactor, if I comply with the other. And therefore as you were called hither, (that is to the explication of the Word of God) to learn how to regulate the natural fear, that that fear do not deject you into a diffidence of God's mercy, so come hither to learn the fear of God, against this half-natural fear, that is, be guided by the Word of God, how far you are to serve the turns of those persons, upon whom ye depend, and when to leave their commandments unperformed.

Well; what will this fear of the Lord teach us? Valour, fortitude; fear teach valour? Yes; and nothing but fear; true fear. As Moses's serpents devoured the false serpents, so doth true fear all false fear. There is nothing so contrary to God, as false fear; neither in his own nature, nor in his love to us. Therefore God's first name in the Bible, and the name which he sticks to, in all the work of the creation, is his name of power, *Elohim; el*, is *fortis Deus*, the God of power; and it is that name in the plural, multiplied power, all power; and what can he fear? God descends to many other human affections; you shall read that God was angry, and sorry, and weary; but *non timuit Deus*, God was never afraid. Neither would God that man should be. So his first blessing upon man, was to fill the earth, and to subdue the creatures, and to rule over them, and to eat what he would upon the earth; all acts of power, and of confidence. As soon as he had offended God, the first impotency that he found in himself, was fear: *I heard thy voice, and I was afraid*[24], says he. He had heard the voice of lions, and was not afraid. There is not a greater commination of a curse than that, *They shall be in a great fear, where no fear is*[25]; which is more vehemently expressed in another place, *I will set my face against*

[24] Gen. iii. 10. [25] Psalm xiii. 5.

you, and you shall fly, when none pursues you; I will send a faintness into their hearts, and the sound of a shaken leaf, shall chase them as a sword[26]. False fear is a fearful curse. To fear that all favours, and all preferments, will go the wrong way, and that therefore I must clap on a bias, and go that way too, this inordinate fear is the curse of God. David's last counsel to Solomon, (but reflecting upon us all) was, *Be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man*[27]. *E culmine corruens, ad gyrum laboris venit*[28], The devil fell from his place in heaven, and now is put to compass the earth. The fearful man that falls from his moral and his Christian constancy, from the fundamental rules of his religion, falls into labyrinths, of incertitudes, and impertinencies, and ambiguities, and anxieties, and irresolutions. *Militia, vita;* our whole life is a warfare; God would not choose cowards; he had rather we were valiant in the fighting of his battles; for battles, and exercise of valour, we are sure to have. God sent a Cain into the world before an Abel; an enemy before a champion. *Abel non suspicor qui non habet Cain*[29]; We never hear of an Abel, but there is a Cain too. And therefore *think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial, as though some strange thing happened unto you*[30]; make account that this world is your scene, your theatre, and that God himself sits to see the combat, the wrestling. *Vetuit Deus mortem Job*[31]; Job was God's champion, and God forbad Satan the taking away of Job's life; for, if he die, (says God in the mouth of that father) *Theatrum nobis non amplius plaudetur*, My theatre will ring with no more plaudits, I shall be no more glorified in the valour and constancy of my saints, my champions. God delights in the constant and valiant man, and therefore a various, a timorous man frustrates, disappoints God.

My errand then is to teach you valour; and must my way be to intimidate you, to teach you fear? Yes, still there is no other fortitude, but the fear of the Lord. We told you before, sadness and fear differ but in the present, and future. And as for the present, *Nihil aliud triste quàm Deum offendere*[32], There is no just cause of sadness, but to have sinned against God, (for, sudden sadness arising in a good conscience, is a spark of fire in the

[26] Levit. xxvi. 17. [27] 1 Kings ii. 2. [28] Gregory. [29] Gregory.
[30] 1 Pet. iv. 12. [31] Chrysostom. [32] Chrysostom.

sea, it must go out;) so there is no just cause of fear, but in God's displeasure. *Mens in timore Domini constituta, non invenit extra quod metuat.*[33] God is all; and if I be established in him, what thing can I fear, when there is nothing without him? Nothing simply, at least nothing that can hurt me; *Quæ sunt in mundo non nocent iis qui extra mundum sunt*[34], This world cannot hurt him that made it, nor them that are laid up in him Jonas did but change his vessel, his ship, when he entered the whale, he was not shipwrecked, God was his pilot there, as well as in the ship, and therefore he as confident there. It is meant of Christ, which is spoken in the person of Wisdom, *Whoso hearkeneth unto me, shall dwell safely, and be quiet from the fear of evil*[35]. And therefore, *when you hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified; these things must come to pass, but the end is not by and by*[36]; imaginations, and temptations, and alienations, and tribulations must come: but this is not the end; the end that God looks for, is, that by the benefit of his fear we should stand out all these.

So then to teach you the fear of the Lord, is to teach you what it doth, that you may love it, and what it is, that you may know it. That which it doth, is, that it makes you a constant, a confident, a valiant man, that which God, who is always the same, loves. How doth it that? Thus. As he that is fallen into the king's hand for debt to him, is safe from other creditors, so is he, that fears the Lord, from other fears. He that loves the Lord, loves him with all his love; he that fears the Lord, fears him with all his fear too; God takes no half affections. Upon those words, *Be not highminded, but fear*[37], Clement of Alexandria, hath another reading; super-time, over-fear; that is, carry thy fear to the highest place; place thy fear there, where it may be above all other fears. *In the multitude of dreams, there are divers vanities, but fear thou the Lord*[38]. All fearful things pass away as dreams, as vanities, to him that fears the Lord; they offer at him, but in vain, if he be established with that fear. In Christ there was no bone broken; in him that fears the Lord, no constant purpose is ever shaken. Of Job it is said, that he was per-

[33] Gregory. [34] Chrysostom. [35] Prov. i. 33.
[36] Luke xxi. 9. [37] Rom. xi. 20. [38] Eccles. v. 7.

fect and upright; that is a rare wonder, but the wonder is qualified in the addition, *He feared God*[39]. So are they put together in Simeon, *Justus et timoratus, He was a just man*[40]; how should he be otherwise? *He feared God.* Consider your enemies, and be not deceived with an imagination of their power, but see whether they be worthy of your fear, if you fear God. The world is your enemy; *Sed vicit mundum, Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world*[41], saith Christ. If it were not so, yet we are none of it; *Ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world*[42]. Howsoever, the world would do us no harm, the world would be good enough of itself, but that the prince of the world, the devil, is *anima mundi*, the soul of this lower world, he inanimates, he actuates, he exalts, the malignity of the world against us; and he is our second enemy. It was not the apple, but the serpent that tempted; Eve, no doubt, had looked upon the fruit before, and yet did not long. But even this enemy is not so dangerous, as he is conceived. In the life of St. Basil, we have a story, that the devil appeared to a penitent sinner at his prayers, and told him, *If you will let me alone, I will let you alone, meddle not with me, and I will not meddle with you.* He found that by this good soul's prayers to God, God had weakened his power, not only upon that man that prayed, but upon others too; and therefore he was content, to come to a cessation of arms with him, that he might turn his forces another way. Truly he might say to many of us, in a worse sense, *Let me alone, and I will let you alone; tempt not me, and I will not tempt you:* our idleness, our high diet, our wanton discourse, our exposing ourselves to occasion of sin, provoke and call in the devil, when he seeks not us. The devil possesses the world, and we possess the devil. But then, if the fear of the Lord possess us, our own concupiscences, (though they be indeed our greatest enemies) because the war that they maintain is a civil war) shall do us no harm, for as the Septuagint in their translation, diminish the power of the devil, in that name Myrmecoleon[43], (a disproportioned creature, made up of a lion and an ant, because as St. Gregory saith upon that place) *Formicis leo est, volatilibus formica*, The

[39] Job i. 1. [40] Luke ii. 25. [41] John xvi. 33.
[42] John xv. 19. [43] Μυρμηκολέων.

devil is a lion to ants, dasheth whole hills of them with his paw, that creep under him, but he is but an ant to birds; they prey upon him, that fly above him. If we fear the Lord, our concupiscences, our carnal affections, ourselves, may prove our best friends, because, as the fire in the furnace did not burn the men, but it burnt off those bands, that fettered and manacled them, (for they were loose, and walked in the furnace[44]) so our concupiscences, if we resist them, shall burn off themselves, and file off their own rust, and our salvation shall be surer by occasion of temptations. We may prevent *mortem mortificatione*, everlasting death, by a disciplinary life. *Mori, ne moriamur*, is his rule too[45], to die to the fires of lust here, lest we die in unquenchable fires hereafter; to die daily, (as St. Paul speaks of himself) lest we die at the last day. To end this, this is the working of the fear of the Lord, it devours all other fears; God will have no half-affections, God will have no partners; he that fears God fears nothing else.

This then is the operation of the fear of the Lord, this is his working; remains only to consider what this fear of the Lord is: and, beloved in him, be not afraid of it; for, this fear of God, is the love of God. And, howsoever there may be some amongst us, whom the height of birth, or of place, or of spirit hath kept from fear, they never feared anything, yet, I think, there is none, that never loved anything. Obligations of matrimony, or of friendship, or of blood, or of alliance, or of conversation, hath given every one of us, no doubt, some sense in ourselves, what it is to love, and to enjoy that which we do love; and the fear of God, is the love of God. *The love of the Lord passeth all things*, saith the wise man[46]: the love, what is that to fear? It follows, *The fear of the Lord, is the beginning of his love.* As they that build arches, place centres under the arch, to bear up the work, till it be dried, and settled, but, after, all is arch, and there is no more centre, no more support; so to lie at the Lord's feet awhile, delivers us into his arms, to accustom ourselves to his fear, establishes us in his love. Be content to stop a little, even at the lowest fear, the fear of hell. When Saul was upon an expedition,

[44] Dan. iii. [45] Augustine. [46] Ecclus. xxv. 11.

and did not find himself well followed, he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces[47], and proclaimed, that whosoever came not to the supply, all his oxen should be so served; and upon this, (says the text there) *The fear of the Lord fell upon all the people, and they came out, as one man, three hundred and thirty thousand.* If Saul's threatening of their worldly goods, wrought so; let God's threatening of thyself, thine inwardest self, thy soul, with hell, make thee to stop even upon thy fear of the Lord, the fear of torment. Stop upon the second fear too, the fear of privation and loss of the sight of God in heaven; that when all we have disputed, with a modest boldness, and wondered with a holy wonder, what kind of sight of God we shall have in heaven, then when thou shouldest come to an end, and to an answer of all these doubts, in an experimental trial, how he shall be seen, (seen thus) thou shalt see then that thou shalt never see him. After thou hast used to hear, all thy life, blessedness summed up into that one act, we shalt see God, thou shalt never come nearer to that knowledge, thou shalt never see him; fear the Lord therefore in this second fear, fear of privation. And fear him in a third fear, the fear of the loss of his grace here in this world, though thou have it now. St. Chrysostom serves himself and us, with an ordinary comparison, a tiler is upon the top of the house, but he looks to his footing, he is afraid of falling. A righteous man is in a high place in God's favour, but he may lose that place. Who is higher than Adam, higher than the angels? and whither fell they? Make not thou then thy assurance of standing, out of their arguments, that say it is impossible for the righteous to fall, the sins of the righteous are no sins in the sight of God; but build thy assurance upon the testimony of a good conscience, that thou usest all diligence, and holy industry, that thou mayest continue in God's favour, and fearest to lose it; for, he that hath no fear of losing, hath no care of keeping. Accustom thyself to these fears, and these fears will flow into a love. As love, and jealousy may be the same thing, so the fear and love of God will be all one; for jealousy is but a fear of losing. *Brevissima differentia Testamentorum, timor et amor*[48]*;* this dis-

[47] 1 Sam. xi. 7. [48] Augustine.

tinguishes the two Testaments, the Old is a Testament of fear, the New of love; yet in this they grow all one, that we determine the Old Testament, in the New, and that we prove the New Testament by the Old; for, but by the Old, we should not know, that there was to be a New, nor, but for the New, that there was an Old; so the two Testaments grow one Bible; so in these two affections, if there were not a jealousy, a fear of losing God, we could not love him; nor can we fear to lose him, except we do love him. Place the affection, (by what name soever) upon the right object, God, and I have, in some measure, done that which this text directed, (*Taught you the fear of the Lord*) if I send you away in either disposition, timorous, or amorous, possessed with either, the fear, or the love of God; for, this fear is inchoative love, and this love is consummative fear; the love of God begins in fear, and the fear of God ends in love; and that love can never end, for God is love.

SERMON CXXVIII.

AN ANNIVERSARY SERMON, PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S, UPON THE COMMEMORATION OF A PARISHIONER, A BENEFACTOR TO THAT PARISH.

GENESIS iii. 24.

And dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

THIS is God's malediction upon the serpent in paradise, there in the region, in the storehouse of all plenty, he must starve; this is the serpent's perpetual fast, his everlasting Lent, (*Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.*) There is a generation derived from this serpent, *progenies viperarum*, a generation of vipers, that will needs in a great, and unnecessary measure, keep this serpent's Lent, and bind themselves to perform his fast; for, the Carthusian will eat no flesh, (and yet, I never saw better bodied men, men of better habitudes and constitution, howsoever they recompense their abstinence from flesh) and the Fueillans will eat neither flesh nor fish, but roots, and salads, (and yet amongst

them, amongst men so enfeebled by roots, was bred up that man, who had both malicious courage, and bodily strength, to kill the last king, who was killed amongst them*) they will be above others in their fasts, fish, and roots will they eat, all the days of their life, but their Master will be above them in his fast, (*Dust must he eat all the days of his life.*)

It is Luther's observation upon this place, that in all Moses his books, God never spoke so long, so much together, as here, upon this occasion. Indeed the occasion was great; it was the arrangement of all the world, and more; of mankind, and of angels too; of Adam, and Eve, (and there were no more of them) and then of the serpent, and of Satan in that, and of all the fallen angels in him. For the sentence which God, as judge gave upon them, upon all these malefactors, of that part which fell upon the woman, all our mothers are experimental witnesses, they brought forth us in sorrow and in travail. Of that part of the sentence which fell upon man, every one of us is an experimental witness, for in every calling, in the sweat of our face, we eat our bread. And of that part of the judgment, which was inflicted upon the serpent, and Satan in him, this dead brother of ours who lies in this consecrated earth, is an experimental witness, who being by death reduced to the state of dust, for so much of him, as is dust, that is, for his dead body, and then, for so long time, as he is to remain in that state of dust, is in the portion, and jurisdiction, and possession of the serpent, that is, in the state which the serpent hath induced upon man, and dust must he eat all the days of his life.

In passing through these words, we shall make but these two steps; first, what the serpent lost, by this judgment inflicted upon him; and secondly, what man gained by it; for these two considerations embrace much, involve much; first, that God's anger is so intensive, and so extensive, so spreading, and so vehement, as that in his justice, he would not spare the serpent, who had no voluntary, no innate, no natural ill disposition towards man, but was only made the instrument of Satan, in the overthrow of man. And then, that God's mercy is so large, so overflowing, so superabundant, as that even in his judgment upon the serpent,

* I suppose this alludes to Ravaillac; Henry IV. was assassinated in 1610.—ED.

he would provide mercy for man. For, as it is a great weight of judgment upon the serpent, that the serpent must eat dust, so is it a great degree of mercy to man, that the serpent must eat but dust, because man's best part is not subject to be served in at his table, the soul cannot become dust, (and dust must he eat all the days of his life.) O, in what little sin, though but a sin of omission, though but a sin of ignorance, in what circumstance of sin, may I hope to escape judgment, if God punished the serpent who was violently, and involuntarily transported in this action? And in what depth, in what height, in what heinousness, in what multiplicity of sin can I doubt of the mercy of my God, who makes judgment itself the instrument, the engine, the chariot of his mercy? What room is there left for presumption, if the serpent, the passive serpent were punished? What room for desperation, if in the punishment, there be a manifestation of mercy? The serpent must eat dust, that is his condemnation, but he shall eat no better meat, he shall eat but dust, there is man's consolation.

First then, as it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God[1], so is it an impossible thing to escape it. God is not ashamed of being jealous; he does not only pronounce that he is a jealous God, but he desires to be known by none other name, (*The Lord whose name is jealous, is a jealous God*[2]) so jealous, as that he will not have his name uttered in vain; not only not blasphemed, not sworn by, but not used indifferently, transitorily, not proverbially, occasionally, not in vain. And if it be, what then? Even for this, he will visit to the third, and fourth generation; and three and four are seven, and seven is infinite. So jealous, as that in the case of the angels, not for looking upon any other creatures, or trusting in them, (for, when they fell, as it is ordinarily received there were no other creatures made) but for not looking immediately, directly upon God, but reflecting upon themselves, and trusting in their own natural parts, God threw those angels into so irrecoverable, and bottomless a depth, as that the merits of Christ Jesus, though of infinite, super-infinite value, do not buoy them up; so jealous a God, is God, so jealous, as that in Adam's case, for over-loving his own wife,

[1] Heb. x. 31. [2] Exod. xxxiv. 14.

for his over-tender compassion of her, for eating the forbidden fruit, *ne constristaretur delicias suas*, (as St. Hierome lays his fault) lest he should deject her into an inordinate and desperate melancholy, and so make her incapable of God's mercy, God threw the first man, and in him, all, out of paradise, out of both paradises, out of that of rest, and plenty here, and that of joy, and glory hereafter. Consider Balaam's sin about cursing God's people[2], or Moses' sin about striking the rock[3], and wouldst not thou be glad to change sins, with either of them? Are not thy sins greater, heavier sins; and yet, wouldst thou not be sorry, to undergo their punishments? Are not thy punishments less? Hast thou found honey, says the Holy Ghost in Solomon[4]; and, he says it promiscuously, and universally, to everybody; eat, as much as is sufficient. Every man may. And then, Jonathan found that honey[5], and knew not that it was forbidden by Saul's proclamation, and did but taste it, and that in a case of extreme necessity, and Jonathan must die. Any man might eat enough, he did but taste, and he must die. If the angels, if Adam, if Balaam, if Moses, if Jonathan did, if the serpent in the text, could consider this, how much cheaper God hath made sin to thee, than to them, might they not have colour in the eye of a natural man, to expostulate with God? Might not Ananias, and Sapphira[6], who only withheld a little of that, which, but a little before, was all their own, and now must die for that, have been excusable if they had said at the last gasp, How many direct sacrileges hath God forborne, in such and such, and we must die? Might not Er, and Onan[7], after their unclean act upon themselves only, for which they died, have been excusable, if they had said at the last gasp, How many direct adulteries, how many unnatural incests hath God forborne in such and such, and we must die? How many loads of miserable wretches mayest thou have seen suffer at ordinary executions, when thou mightest have said with David, *Lord I have done wickedly, but these sheep, what have they done?* What had this serpent done?

The serpent was more subtle than any other beast[8]. It is a

[2] Numb. xxii. 6. [3] Numb. xx. 11.
[4] Prov. xxv. 16. [5] 1 Sam. xiv. 27. [6] Acts v. 8.
[7] Gen. xxxviii. 9. [8] Gen. iii. 1.

dangerous thing to have a capacity to do evil; to be fit to be wrought upon, is a dangerous thing. How many men have been drawn into danger, because they were too rich? How many women into solicitation, and temptation, because they were too beautiful? Content thyself with such a mediocrity in these things, as may make thee fit to serve God, and to assist thy neighbour, in a calling, and be not ambitious of extraordinary excellency in any kind; it is a dangerous thing, to have a capacity to do evil. God would do a great work; and he used the simplicity of the ass; he made Balaam's ass speak[9]; but the devil makes use of the subtlety, of the craft of the serpent; the serpent is his instrument; no more but so, but so much he is, his instrument. And then, says St. Chrysostom, *Pater noster execratur gladium*, As a natural father would, so our heavenly Father does hate, that which was the instrument of the ruin of his children. Wherein hath he expressed that hate? Not to bind ourselves to Josephus his opinion, (though some of the ancients in the Christian church have seconded that opinion too) that at that time the serpent could go upright, and speak, and understand, and knew what he did, and so concurred actually and willingly to the temptation and destruction of man, though he were but another's instrument, he became odious to God. Our bodies, of themselves, if they had no souls, have no disposition to any evil; yet, these bodies which are but instruments, must burn in hell. The earth was accursed for man's sin, though the earth had not been so much as an instrument of his sin; only because it was, after, to conduce to the punishment of his children, it was accursed, God withdrew his love from it. And in the law, those beasts with which men committed bestiality, were to be stoned, as well as the men[10]. How poor a plea will it be, to say, at the last day, I got nothing by such an extortion, to mine own purse, it was for my master; I made no use of that woman whom I had corrupted, it was for a friend. Miserable instrument of sin, that hadst not the profit, nor the pleasure, and must have the damnation! As the prophet calls them, that help us towards heaven, Saviours, (*Saviours shall come up on Mount*

[9] Numb. xxii. 28. [10] Levit. xx. 15.

Sion[11]) so are all that concur instrumentally to the damnation of others, devils. And, at the last day, we shall see many sinners saved, and their instruments perish. Adam, and Eve, both God interrogated, and gave them time, to meditate and to deprecate; to Adam, he says, *Where art thou, and, who told thee that thou wast naked?* And to Eve, *What is this that thou hast done?* But to the serpent no such breathing; the first word is, *Quia fecisti;* no calling for evidence whether he had done it or no, but, *Because thou hast done it, thou art accursed.* Sin is treason against God; and in treason there is no accessory; the instrument is the principal.

We pass from that first part, the consideration of heavy judgments upon faults, in appearance but small, derived from the punishment of the serpent, though but an instrument. Let no man set a low value upon any sin; let no man think it a little matter to sin some one sin, and no more; or that one sin but once, and no oftener; or that once but a little way in that sin, and no farther; or all this, to do another a pleasure, though he take none in it himself, (as though there were charity in the society of sin, and that it were an alms to help a man to the means of sinning.) The least sin cost the blood of the Son of God, and the least sinner may lose the benefit of it, if he presume of it. No man may cast himself from a pinnacle, because an angel may support him; no man may kill himself, because there is a resurrection of the body; nor wound his soul to death by sin, because there may be a resurrection of that, by grace. Here is no room for presumption upon God; but, as little for desperation in God; for, in the punishment of the serpent, we shall see, that his mercy, and justice are inseparable; that, as all the attributes of God, make up but one God (goodness, and wisdom, and power are but one God) so mercy and justice make up but one act; they do not only duly succeed, and second one another, they do not only accompany one another, they are not only together, but they are all one. As manna, though it tasted to one man like one thing, to another like another, (for it tasted to every man like that, that that man liked best) yet still was the same

[11] Obad. 21.

manna; so, for God's corrections, they have a different taste in different persons; and howsoever the serpent found nothing but judgment, yet we find mercy even in that judgment. *The evening and the morning make up the day*, says Moses[12]; as soon as he had named evening comes in morning, no interposing of the mention of a dark, and sad night between. As soon as I hear of a judgment, I apprehend mercy, no interposing of any dark or sad suspicion, or diffidence, or distrust in God, and his mercy; and to that purpose we consider the serpent's punishment, and especially as it is heightened, and aggravated in this text, *Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.*

There are three degrees in the serpent's punishment; first, *Super pectus, He must creep upon his belly;* and secondly, *Inimicitias ponam, I will put enmity*, God will raise him an enemy; and thirdly, *Pulverem comedes, Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.* And, in all these three, though they aggravate the judgment upon the serpent, there is mercy to us; for, for the first, that the serpent now does but creep upon his belly, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory understand this belly to be the seat of our affections, and our concupiscences; that the serpent hath no power upon our heart, nor upon our brain, for, if we bring a temptation to consideration, to deliberation, that we stop at it, think of it, study it, and foresee the consequences, this frustrates the temptation. Our nobler faculties are always assisted with the grace of God to resist him, though the belly, the bowels of sin, in sudden surprisals, and ebullitions, and foamings of our concupiscences, be subject to him: for, though it may seem, that if that be the meaning, (which, from St. Augustine and St. Gregory we have given you) that the serpent hath this power over our affections, and that is intended by that, the belly, it should rather have been said, *super pectus vestrum*, he shall creep upon your belly, than upon his own, yet, indeed, all that is his own, which we have submitted and surrendered to him, and he is upon his own, because we make ourselves his; (for, *to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are*[13].) So that if he be *super pectus nostrum*, if he be upon our belly, he is upon his own. But he does but creep; he does not fly; he is not

[12] Gen. i. 5. [13] Rom. vi. 16.

presently upon you, in a present possession of you; you may discern the beginning of sin, and the ways of sin, in the approaches of the serpent, if you will. The serpent leaves a slime that discovers him, where he creeps; at least behind him, after a sin, you may easily see occasion of remorse, and detestation of that sin, and thereby prevent relapses, if you have not watched him well enough in his creeping upon you. When he is a lion, he does not devour all whom he finds; *He seeks whom he may devour*[14]; he may not devour all, nor any but those, who cast themselves into his jaws, by exposing themselves to temptations to sin.

He does but creep; why, did he any more before? Was his form changed in this punishment? Many of the ancients think literally that it was; and that before the serpent did go upon feet; we are not sure of that; nor is it much probable. That may well be true, which Luther says, *Fuit suavissima bestiola*, till then it was a creature more lovely, more sociable, more conversable with man, and, (as Calvin expresses the same) *Minus odiosus*, Man did less abhor the serpent before, than after. Beloved, it is a degree of mercy, if God bring that, which was formerly a temptation to me, to a less power over me, than formerly it had; if deformity, if sickness, if age, if opinion, if satiety, if inconstancy, if anything have worn out a temptation in that face, that transported me heretofore, it is a degree of mercy. Though the serpent be the same serpent, yet if be not so acceptable, so welcome to me, as heretofore, it is a happy, a blessed change. And so, in that respect, there was mercy.

It was a punishment to the serpent, that, though he were the same still as before, yet he was not able to insinuate himself as before, because he was not so welcome to us. So, the having of the same form, which he had, might be a punishment, as nakedness was to man after his fall; he was naked before, but he saw it not, he felt it not, he needed no clothes before; now, nakedness brings shame, and infirmities with it. So, God was so sparing towards the serpent, as that he made him not worse in nature, than before, and so merciful to us, as that he made us more jealous of him, and thereby more safe against him, than before. Which is also intimated pregnantly, in the next step of

[14] 1 Peter v. 8.

his punishment, *Inimicitias ponam*, that God hath kindled a war between him and us. Peace is a blessed state, but it must be the peace of God; for, Simeon and Levi are brethren[15], they agree well enough together; but they are instruments of evil; and, in that case, the better agreement, the worse. So, war is a fearful state; but not so, if it be the war of God, undertaken for his cause, or by his word. Many times, a state suffers by the security of a peace, and gains by the watchfulness of a war. Woe be to that man that is so at peace, as that the spirit fights not against the flesh in him; and woe to them too, who would make them friends, or reconcile them, between whom, God hath perpetuated an everlasting war, the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, Christ and Belial, truth and superstition. Till God proclaimed a war between them, the serpent did easily overthrow them, but therefore God brought it to a war, that man might stand upon his guard. And so it was a mercy.

But the greatest mercy is in the last, and that which belongs most directly, (though all conduce pertinently and usefully) to our present occasion; *Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.* He must eat dust, that is, our bodies, and carnal affections; he was at a richer diet, he was in better pasture before; before, he fed upon souls too; but for that his head was bruised, in the promise of a Messias, who delivers our souls from his tyranny; but the dust, the body, that body, which for all the precious ransom, and the rich, and large mercy of the Messias, must die, that dust is left to the serpent, to Satan, that is, to that dissolution, and that putrefaction, which he hath induced upon man, in death. He eats but our dust, in our death, when he hath brought us to that; that is a mercy; nay he eats up our dust before our death, which is a greater mercy; our carnal affections, our concupiscences are eaten up, and devoured by him; and so, even his eating is a sweeping, a cleansing, a purging of us. Many times we are the better for his temptations. My discerning a storm, makes me put on a cloak. My discerning a temptation, makes me see my weakness, and fly to my strength. Nay, I am sometimes the safer, and the readier for a victory, by having been overcome by him. The sense, and the remorse of a sin, after I have fallen into it, puts me into a better state, and establishes

[15] Gen. xlix. 5.

better conditions between God and me than were before, when I felt no temptations to sin. He shall eat up my dust, so, as that it shall fly into mine eyes; that is, so work upon my carnal affections, as that they shall not make me blind, nor unable to discern that it is he that works. It is said of one kind of serpent[16], that because they know, by an instinct they have, that their skin is good for the use of man, (for the falling sickness) out of envy, they hide their skin, when they cast it. The serpent is loth we should have any benefit of him; but we have; even his temptations arm us, and the very falling exalts us, when after a sin of infirmity, we come to a true, and serious repentance, and scrutiny of our conscience. So he hath nothing to eat but our dust, and he eats up our dust so, as that he contributes to our glory, by his malice. The whale was Jonah's pilot[17]: the crows were Elias' caters[18]; the lions were Daniel's sentinels[19]; the viper was Paul's advocate[20]; it pleaded for him, and brought the beholders in an instant, from extreme to extreme, from crying out that Paul was a murderer, to cry that he was a god. Though at any time, the serpent having brought me to a sin, cry out, Thou art a murderer, that is, bring me to a desperate sense of having murdered mine own soul, yet in that darkness I shall see light, and by a present repentance, and effectual application of the merits of my Saviour, I shall make the serpent see, I am a god; thus far a god, that by my adhering to Christ, I am made partaker of the divine nature[21]. For, that which St. Chrysostom says of baptism, is true too in the second baptism, repentance, *Deposui terram, et cœlum indui;* then I may say to the serpent, Your meat is dust; and I was dust; but *Deposui terram*, I have shaked off my dust, by true repentance, for I have shaked off myself, and am a new creature[22], and am not now meat for your table. *Jam terra non sum, sed sal*, says the same father, I am not now unsavoury dust, but I am salt; and, *sal ex aqua et vento*, says he; salt is made of water and wind; I am made up of the water of baptism, of the water of repentance, of the water that accompanies the blood of Christ Jesus, and of that wind that

[16] Stellio. [17] Jonah i. 17. [18] 1 Kings xvii. 6.
[19] Dan. vi. 22. [20] Acts xxviii.
[21] 2 Peter i. 4. [22] 2 Cor. v. 17.

blows where it list[23], and hath been pleased to blow upon me, the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, and I am no longer meat for the serpent, for *Dust must he eat all the days of his life.* I am a branch of that vine, (Christ *is the vine, and we are the branches*[24]) I am a leaf of that *rose of Sharon*, and of that *lily of the valleys*[25]; I am a plant in the *orchard of pomegranates*[26], and that orchard of pomegranates is the church; I am a drop of that dew[27], that dew that lay upon the head of Christ. And this vine, and this rose, and lily, and pomegranates, of paradise, and this dew of heaven, are not dust, *And dust must thou eat all the days of thy life.*

So then, the prophecy of Esay fulfils itself, That when Christ shall reign powerfully over us, *the wolf and the lamb shall feed together*[28], (Saul and Ananias shall meet in a house, (as St. Hierome expounds that) and Ananias not be afraid of a persecutor). *The lion shall eat straw like the bullock*, says that prophet in that place, *Tradent se rusticitati Scripturarum*, says the same father, The strongest understandings shall content themselves with the homeliness of the Scriptures, and feed upon plain places, and not study new dishes, by subtleties, and perplexities, and then, *Dust shall be the serpent's meat*, says the prophet there, the power of Satan shall reach but to the body, and not touch a soul wrapped up in Christ. But then, it is *tota vita, all his life.* His diet is impaired, but it is not taken away; he eats but dust, but he shall not lack that, as long as he lives. And how long lives the serpent, this serpent? The life of this serpent is to seduce man, to practise upon man, to prevail upon man, as far, and as long as man is dust. And therefore we are not only his dust, whilst we live (all which time we serve in our carnal affections, for him to feed upon) but when we are dead, we are his dust still. Man was made in that state, as that he should not resolve to dust, but should have passed from this world to the next, without corruption, or resolution of the body. That which God said to Adam, *Dust thou art*[29], belonged to all, from the beginning, he, and all we were to be of dust, in his best integrity; but that which God adds there, *Et in terram reverteris*, (*Dust thou art, and to it thou shalt*

[23] John iii. 8. [24] John xv. 5. [25] Cant. ii. 1. [26] Cant. iv. 13.
[27] Cant. v. 2. [28] Isaiah LXV. 25. [29] Gen. iii. 19.

return) that the serpent brought in, that was induced upon man by him, and his temptation. So that when we are living dust here he eats us, and when we are dead dust too, in the grave, he feeds upon us, because it proceeds from him both that we die, and that we are detained in the state of exinanition, and ingloriousness, in the dust of the earth, and not translated immediately to the joys of heaven, as but for him, we should have been. But as, though he do feed upon our living dust, that is, induce sicknesses, and hunger, and labour, and cold, and pain upon our bodies here, God raises even that dust out of his hands, and redeems it from his jaws, in affording us a deliverance, or a restitution from those bodily calamities here, as he did abundantly to his servant, and our example, Job, so, though he feed upon our dead dust and detain our bodies in the disconsolate state of the grave, yet, as the Godhead, the divine nature did not depart from the body of Christ when it lay dead in the grave, so neither doth the love and power of God, depart from the body of a Christian, though resolved to dust in the grave, but, in his due time, shall re-collect that dust, and re-compact that body, and re-unite that soul, in everlasting joy and glory. And till then, the serpent lives; till the judgment, Satan hath power upon that part of man; and that is the serpent's life, first to practise our death, and then to hold us in the state of the dead. Till then we attend with hope, and with prayers God's holy pleasure upon us, and then begins the unchangeable state in our life, in body and soul together, then we begin to live, and then ends the serpent's life, that is, his earnest practice upon us in our life, and his faint triumph in continuing over our dust. That time, (the time of the general resurrection) being not yet come, the devils thought themselves wronged, and complained that Christ came before the time to torment them[20]; and therefore Christ yielded so much to their importunity, as to give them leave to enter into the swine. And therefore, let not us murmur nor over-mourn for that, which as we have induced it upon ourselves, so God shall deliver us from, at last, that is, both death, and corruption after death, and captivity in that comfortless state, but for the resurrection. For so long we are to be dust, and so long lasts the serpent's life,

[20] Matt. viii. 29.

Satan's power over man; dust must he eat all the days of his life.

In the mean time, (for our comfort in the way) when this serpent becomes a lion, yet there is a lion of the tribe of Judah[31], that is too strong for him. So, if he who is *serpens serpens humi*, the serpent condemned to creep upon the ground, do transform himself into a flying serpent, and attempt our nobler faculties, there is *serpens exaltatus*, a serpent lifted up in the wilderness[32] to recover all them that are stung, and feel that they are stung with this serpent, this flying serpent, that is, these high and continued sins. The creeping serpent, the grovelling serpent, is craft; the exalted serpent, the crucified serpent, is wisdom. All your worldly cares, all your crafty bargains, all your subtle matches, all your diggings into other men's estates, all your hedgings in of debts, all your planting of children in great alliances; all these diggings, and hedgings and plantings savour of the earth, and of the craft of that serpent, that creeps upon the earth: but crucify this craft of yours, bring all your worldly subtlety under the cross of Christ Jesus, husband your farms so, as you may give a good account to him, press your debts so, as you would be pressed by him, market and bargain so, as that you would give all, to buy that field, in which his treasure, and his pearl is hid, and then you have changed the serpent, from the serpent of perdition creeping upon the earth, to the serpent of salvation exalted in the wilderness. Creeping wisdom, that still looks downward, is but craft; crucified wisdom, that looks upward, is truly wisdom. Between you and that ground-serpent God hath kindled a war; and the nearer you come to a peace with him, the farther ye go from God, and the more ye exasperate the Lord of hosts, and you whet his sword against your own souls. A truce with that serpent, is too near a peace; to condition with your conscience for a time, that you may continue in such a sin, till you have paid for such a purchase, married such a daughter, bought such an annuity, undermined and eaten out such an unthrift, this truce, (though you mean to end it before you die) is too near a peace with that serpent, between whom and you, God hath kindled an everlasting war. A cessation of arms, that

[31] Rev. v. 5. [32] Numbers xxi. 9.

is, not to watch all his attempts and temptations, not to examine all your particular actions, a treaty of peace, that is, to dispute and debate in the behalf and favour of a sin, to palliate, to disguise, to extenuate that sin, this is too near a peace with this serpent, this creeping serpent. But in the other Serpent, the crucified Serpent, God hath reconciled to himself, all things in heaven, and earth, and hell. You have peace in the assistance of the angels of heaven, peace in the contribution of the powerful prayers, and of the holy examples of the saints upon earth, peace in the victory and triumph over the power of hell, peace from sins towards men, peace of affections in yourselves, peace of conscience towards God. From your childhood you have been called upon to hold your peace; to be content is to hold your peace; murmur not at God, in any corrections of his, and you do hold this peace. That creeping serpent, Satan, is war, and should be so; the crucified Serpent Christ Jesus is peace, and shall be so for ever. The creeping serpent eats our dust, the strength of our bodies, in sicknesses, and our glory in the dust of the grave: the crucified Serpent hath taken our flesh, and our blood, and given us his flesh, and his blood for it; and therefore, as David, when he was thought base, for his holy freedom in dancing before the ark[83], said he would be more base; so, since we are all made of red earth, let him that is red, be more red; let him that is red with the blood of his own soul, be red again in blushing for that redness, and more red in the communion of the blood of Christ Jesus; whom we shall eat all the days of our life, and be mystically, and mysteriously, and spiritually, and sacramentally united to him in this life, and gloriously in the next.

In this state of dust, and so in the territory of the serpent, the tyrant of the dead, lies this dead brother of ours, and hath lain some years, who occasions our meeting now, and yearly upon this day, and whose soul, we doubt not, is in the hands of God, who is the God of the living. And having gathered a good gomer of manna, a good measure of temporal blessings in this life, and derived a fair measure thereof, upon them, whom nature and law directed it upon, (and in whom we beseech God to bless it) hath

[83] 2 Sam. vi. 14.

also distributed something to the poor of this parish, yearly, this day, and something to a meeting for the conserving of neighbourly love, and something for this exercise. In which, no doubt, his intention was not so much to be yearly remembered himself, as that his posterity, and his neighbours might be yearly remembered to do as he had done. For, this is truly to glorify God in his saints, to sanctify ourselves in their examples; to celebrate them, is to imitate them. For, as it is probably conceived, and agreeably to God's justice, that they that write wanton books, or make wanton pictures, have additions of torment, as often as other men are corrupted with their books, or their pictures: so may they, who have left permanent examples of good works, well be believed, to receive additions of glory and joy, when others are led by that to do the like: and so, they who are extracted, and derived from him, and they who dwelt about him, may assist their own happiness, and enlarge his, by following his good example in good proportions. Amen.

SERMON CXXIX.

PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S.

LAMENTATIONS iii. 1.

I am the man, that hath seen affliction, by the rod of his wrath.

You remember in the history of the passion of our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, there was an *Ecce homo*, a showing, an exhibiting of that man, in whom we are all blessed. Pilate presented him to the Jews so, with that *Ecce homo, Behold the man*[1]. That man upon whom the wormwood and the gall of all the ancient prophecies, and the venom and malignity of all the cruel instruments thereof, was now poured out; that man who was left *as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground, without form, or beauty, or comeliness, that we should desire to see him*[2], as the

[1] John xix. 5. [2] Isaiah liii. 2.

prophet Esay exhibits him; that man who upon the brightness of his eternal generation in the bosom of his Father, had now cast a cloud of a temporary and earthly generation in the womb of his mother, that man, who, as he entered into the womb of his first mother, the blessed Virgin, by a supernatural way, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, so he vouchsafed to enter into the womb of her, whom he had accepted for his second mother, the earth, by an unnatural way, not by a natural, but by a violent, and bitter death, that man so torn and mangled, wounded with thorns, oppressed with scorns and contumelies, Pilate presents and exhibits so, *Ecce homo, Behold the man.* But in all this depression of his, in all his exinanition, and evacuation, yet he had a crown on, yet he had a purple garment on, the emblems, the characters of majesty were always upon him. And these two considerations, the miseries that exhaust, and evacuate, and annihilate man in this life, and yet, those sparks, and seeds of morality, that lie in the bosom, that still he is a man, the afflictions that depress and smother, that suffocate and strangle their spirits in their bosoms, and yet that unsmotherable, that unquenchable spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father, that still he is a Christian, these thorns, and yet these crowns, these contumelies, and yet this purple, are the two parts of this text, *I am the man, that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.* For, here is an *ecce*, behold; Jeremy presents a map, a manifestation of as great affliction, as the rod of God's wrath could inflict; but yet it is *Ecce homo, Behold the man, I am the man*, he is not demolished, he is not incinerated so, not so annihilated, but that he is still a man; God preserves his children from departing from the dignity of men, and from the sovereign dignity of Christian men, in the deluge, and inundation of all afflictions.

And these two things, so considerable in that *ecce homo*, in the exhibiting of Christ, that then when he was under those scorns, and crosses, he had his crowns, his purples, ensigns of majesty upon him, may well be parts of this text; for, when we come to consider who is the person of whom Jeremy says, *I am the man*, we find many of the ancient expositors take these words prophetically of Christ himself; and that Christ himself who says,

Behold and see if there be any sorrow, like unto my sorrow[3], says here also, *I am the man, that hath seen affliction, by the rod of his wrath.* But because there are some other passages in this chapter, that are not conveniently appliable to Christ, (it is not likely that Christ would say of himself, *That his Father shut out his prayer, even then when he cried and shouted;* not likely that Christ would say of himself, *That his Father was to him, as a bear in the way, and as a lion in secret places;* not likely that Christ would say of himself, *That his Father had removed his soul far from peace*) therefore this chapter, and this person cannot be so well understood of Christ. Others therefore have understood it of Jerusalem itself; but then it would not be expressed in that sex, it would not be said of Jerusalem, *I am the man.* Others understand it of any particular man, that had his part, in that calamity, in that captivity; that the affliction was so universal upon all of that nation of what condition soever, that every man might justly say, *Ego vir, I am the man that have seen affliction.* But then all this chapter must be figurative, and still, where we can, it becomes, it behoves us, to maintain a literal sense and interpretation of all Scriptures. And that we shall best do in this place, if we understand these words literally of Jeremy himself, that the minister of God, the preacher of God, the prophet of God, Jeremy himself, was the man; the preacher is the text, *Ego vir, I am the man:* as the ministers of God are most exposed to private contumelies, so should they be most affected with public calamities, and soonest come to say with the apostle, *Quis infirmatur, Who is weak, and I am not weak too, who is offended, and I am not affected with it*[4]? When the people of God are distressed with sickness, with dearth, with any public calamity, the minister is the first man, that should be compassionate, and sensible of it.

In these words then, (*I am the man, &c.*) these are our two parts; first the burden, and then the ease, first the weight, and then the alleviation, first the discomfort, and then the refreshing, the sea of afflictions that overflow, and surround us all, and then our emergency and lifting up our head above that sea. In the first we shall consider, first, the generality of afflictions; and that

[3] Lam. i. 12. [4] 2 Cor. xi. 29.

first in their own nature, and then secondly in that name of man upon whom they fall here, *Gheber*, *Ego vir*, *I am the man*, which is that name of man, by which the strongest, the powerfulest of men are denoted in the Scriptures; they, the strongest, the mightiest, they that thought themselves safest, and sorrow-proof, are afflicted. And lastly, in the person, upon whom these afflictions are fastened here, Jeremy the prophet, of whom literally we understand this place: the dearliest beloved of God, and those of whose service God may have use in his church, they are subject to be retarded in their service, by these afflictions. Nothing makes a man so great amongst men, nothing makes a man so necessary to God, as that he can escape afflictions. And when we shall have thus considered the generality thereof, these three ways, in the nature of affliction itself, in the signification of that name of exaltation Gheber, and in the person of Jeremy, we shall pass to the consideration of the vehemency and intenseness thereof, in those circumstances that are laid down in our text, first, that these afflictions are *ejus*, his, the Lord's, and then they are *in virga*, in his rod, and again, *in virga iræ*, in the rod of his wrath. And in these two branches, the extent and the weight of afflictions, and in these few circumstances, that illustrate both, we shall determine our first part, the burden, the discomfort. When we shall come at last, to our last part, of comfort, we shall find that also to grow out into two branches; for, first, *vidit*, he saw his affliction, (*I am the man that hath seen affliction*) affliction did not blind him, not stupify him, affliction did not make him insensible of affliction, (which is a frequent, but a desperate condition) *vidit*, he saw it; that is first, and then, *ego vir*, I am the man that saw it, he maintained the dignity of his station, still he played the man, still he survived to glorify God, and to be an example to other men, of patience under God's corrections, and of thankfulness in God's deliverance. In which last part we shall also see, that all those particulars that did aggravate the affliction in the former part, (that they were from the Lord, from his rod, from the rod of his wrath) do all exalt our comfort in this, that it is a particular comfort that our afflictions are from the Lord, another that they are from his rod, and another also, that they are from the rod of his wrath.

First then in our first part, and the first branch thereof, the generality of affliction, considered in the nature thereof: we met all generally, in the first treason against ourselves; without exception all; in Adam's rebellion, who was not in his loins? And in a second treason, we met all too; in the treason against Christ Jesus, we met all; all our sins were upon his shoulders. In those two treasons we have had no exception, no exemption. The penalty for our first treason, in Adam, in a great part, we do all undergo; we do all die, though not without a lothness and colluctation at the time, yet without a deliberate desire to live in this world for ever. How loth soever any man be to die, when death comes, yet I think, there is no man that ever formed a deliberate prayer, or wish, that he might never die. That penalty for our first treason in Adam, we do bear. And would any be excepted from bearing any thing deduced from his second treason, his conspiracy against Christ, from imitation of his passion, and fulfilling his sufferings in his body, in bearing cheerfully the afflictions and tribulations of this life? *Omnis caro corruperat*[5]; and thou art within that general indictment, All flesh had corrupted his way upon earth. *Statutum est omnibus mori*; and thou art within that general statute, *It is appointed unto all men once to die*[6]. *Anima quæ peccaverit, ipsa morietur*[7]: and thou art within that general sentence, and judgment, *Every soul that sinneth shall die*, the death of the soul. Out of these general propositions thou canst not get; and when in the same universality there cometh a general pardon, *Deus vult omnes salvos*[8], *God will have all men to be saved*, because that pardon hath in it that *ita quod*, that condition, *Omnem filium, He scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*[9], Wouldst thou lose the benefit of that adoption, that filiation, that patrimony and inheritance, rather than admit patiently his fatherly chastisements in the afflictions and tribulations in this life? Beloved, the death of Christ is given to us, as a hand-writing[10]: for, when Christ nailed that *chirographum*, that first hand-writing, that had passed between the devil and us, to his cross, he did not leave us out of debt, nor absolutely discharged, but he laid another *chirographum* upon us, another obli-

[5] Gen. vi. 12. [6] Heb. ix. 27. [7] Ezek. xviii. 4.
[8] 1 Tim. ii. 4. [9] Heb. xii. 6. [10] Col. ii. 14.

gation arising out of his death. His death is delivered to us, as a writing, but not a writing only in the nature of a piece of evidence, to plead our inheritance by, but a writing in the nature of a copy, to learn by; it is not only given us to read, but to write over, and practise; not only to tell us what he did, but how we should do so too.

All the evils and mischiefs that light upon us in this world, come (for the most part) from this, *Quia fruimur utendis*[11], because we think to enjoy those things which God hath given us only to use. God hath given us a use of things, and we set our hearts upon them. And this hath a proportion, an assimilation, an accommodation in the death of Christ. God hath proposed that for our use, in this world, and we think to enjoy it; God would have us do it over again, and we think it enough to know that Christ hath done it already; God would have us write it, and we do only read it; God would have us practise the death of Christ, and we do but understand it. The fruition, the enjoying of the death of Christ, is reserved for the next life; to this life belongs the use of it; that use of it, to fulfil his sufferings in our bodies, by bearing the afflictions and tribulations of this life. For, *Prius trophæum crucis erexit, deinde martyribus tradidit erigendum*[12]; First Christ set up the victorious trophy of his cross himself, and then he delivered it over to his martyrs to do as he had done. Nor are they only his martyrs that have actually died for him, but into the signification of that name, which signifies a witness, fall all those, who have glorified him, in a patient and constant bearing the afflictions and tribulations of this life. All being guilty of Christ's death, there lies an obligation upon us all, to fulfil his sufferings. And this is the generality of afflictions, as we consider them in their own nature.

Now, this generality is next expressed, in this word of exaltation, Gheber, *Ego vir, I am the man;* it was that man, that is denoted and signified in that name, that hath lain under affliction, and therefore no kind of man was likely to escape. There are in the original Scriptures, four words, by which man is called; four names of man; and any of the others, (if we consider the origination of the words) might better admit afflictions to insult

[11] Augustine. [12] Ambrose.

upon him, than this, Gheber, *vir*, *I am the man*. At first, man is called Ishe; a word, which their grammarians derive *à sonitu*, from a sound, from a voice. Whether man's excellency be in that, that he can speak, which no other creature can do; or whether man's impotency be in that, that he comes into the world crying, in this denomination, in this word, man is but a sound, but a voice, and that is no great matter. Another name of man is Adam, and Adam is no more but earth, and red earth, and the word is often used for blushing. When the name of man imports no more but so, no more but the frailty of the earth, and the bashful acknowledgment and confession of that frailty, in infinite infirmities, there is no great hope of escaping afflictions in this name, Adam. Less in his third name, Enosh: for Enosh signifies *ægrum*, *calamitosum*, a person naturally subject to, and actually possessed with all kinds of infirmities. So that this name of man, Enosh, is so far from exempting him, as that it involves him, it overflows him in afflictions: he hath a miserable name, as well as a miserable nature, *Put them in fear*, *O Lord*, (says David) *that they may know they are but men*[13]; but such men, as are denoted in that name of man, Enosh, (for there that name is expressed) weak and miserable men. Now, (to collect these) as man is nothing but a frivolous, an empty, a transitory sound, or but a sad and lamentable voice, (he is no more in his first name Ishe). As man is nothing but red earth, a mouldering clod of infirmities, and then, blushing, that is, guilty, sensible, and ashamed of his own miserable condition, (and man is no more, as he is but Adam). As man is nothing but a receptacle of diseases in his body, of crosses in his estate, of immoderate griefs for those crosses in his mind, (and man is no more, as he is but Enosh) so there is no wonder, why man in general should be under affliction, for these names import, these names enforce it: as Adam gave names to the creatures according to their natures, so God hath given names to man, according to his nature, miserable names, to miserable wretches. But when man is presented in this text, in this fourth and great name, Gheber, which denotes excellency, excellency in virtue, (his mind rectified) excellency in wealth, (his estate enlarged) excellency in power, (his authority

[13] Psalm ix. 20.

extended) excellency in favour, (all seas calm on the top, and fordable at the bottom to him) when man is expressed in that word, which Isaac used to Jacob, in his abundant blessing, *Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee*[14]: and then, in this height, this height of virtue and merit, of wealth and treasure, of command and power, of favour and acclamation, is thrown down into the pit of misery, and submitted to all afflictions, what man can hope to be exempted? Man carries the spawn and seeds and eggs of affliction in his own flesh, and his own thoughts make haste to hatch them, and to bring them up. We make all our worms snakes, all our snakes vipers, all our vipers dragons, by our murmuring. And so have you this generality of affliction, considered in this name of exaltation Gheber.

Now, in our third consideration of this extent of affliction, in that this person, this prophet Jeremy, (for, of him literally we understand these words, *Ego vir, I am the man*) is thus submitted to these extraordinary afflictions, we see first, that no man is so necessary to God, as that God cannot come to his ends, without that man; God can lack, and leave out any man in his service. If Christ had revealed to his apostles, before he called them to be apostles, or qualified them for that service, that he had a purpose to subdue and convert the whole world, by the labour and the means of twelve men, would it ever have fallen or entered into their imaginations, that any of them, should have been any of those twelve? Men of low rank, and estimation, men disfurnished, not only of all helps of learning, but of all experience in civil or in ecclesiastical affairs? And as Christ infused new abilities into these men that had none, so can he effect his purposes without them, who think they have all. And therefore, when he had chosen his twelve apostles, and had endowed and qualified them for that service, when in their sight some of his disciples forsook him, because he preached *duros sermones*, doctrines hard to flesh and blood, Christ was not afraid to say to the twelve, *Numquid et vos vultis abire, Will ye also go away*[15]? He says it to the twelve; and he does not say, *Will any of you*, but *will you, you twelve, all, go away?* I can do my work, without you. And therefore let no man go about to promove or advance

[14] Gen. xxvii. 29. [15] John vi. 67.

his own fancies, his own singularities, his own schismatical opinions, because he hath done God service before, because he hath possessed himself of the love of that congregation, because no man's preaching is so acceptable there, as his, and that the church cannot be without him; for, no man hath made God beholden to him, so far, as that he should be afraid to offend him. So also let no man be disheartened nor discouraged, if he have brought a good conscience, and faithful labour to the service of God. Let him not think his wages the worse paid, if God do mingle bodily sickness, temporal losses, personal disgraces, with his labours; let him not think that God should not do thus to them that wear out themselves in his service; for the best part of our wages is adversity, because that gives us a true fast, and a right value of our prosperity. Jeremy had it; the best of his rank must.

In his example, we have thus much more, that no man is excused of subsequent afflictions, by precedent, nor of falling into more, by having borne some already. Elias reckoned too hastily, when he told God, *Satis est, Now it is enough, Lord take away my life*[16]; God had more to lay upon him. A last year's fever prevents not this, nor a sickness in the fall, another in the spring. Men are not as such copses, as being felled now, stand safe from the axe for a dozen years after; but our afflictions are as beggars, they tell others, and send more after them; sickness does but usher in poverty, and poverty contempt, and contempt dejection of spirit, and a broken spirit who can bear? No man may refuse a privy seal, because he hath lent before. And, though afflictions be not of God's revenue, (for, afflictions are not real services to God) yet they are of his subsidies, and he hath additional glory out of our afflictions; and, the more, the more. Jeremy had been scornfully and despitefully put in the stocks by Pashur, before[17]; he had been imprisoned in the king's house, before[18]; he had been put in the dungeon, and almost starved in the mire, before[19]; and yet he was reserved to this further calamity. Affliction is truly a part of our patrimony, of our portion. If, as the prodigal did, we waste our portion, (that is, make no use of our former affliction) it is not the least part of God's bounty

[16] 1 Kings xix. 4.
[17] Jer. xx. 2.
[18] Jer. xxxii. 2.
[19] Jer. xxxviii. 9.

and liberality towards us, if he give us a new stock, a new feeling of new calamities, that we may be better improved by them, than by the former; Jeremy's former afflictions were but preparatives for more; no more are ours.

And, in his example, we have this one note more, that when the hand of God had been upon him, he declared, he published God's hand-writing: not only to his own conscience, by acknowledging that all these afflictions were for his sins, but by acknowledging to the world, that God had laid such and such afflictions upon him. There is not a nearer step to obduration, nor a worse defrauding of God of his glory, than to be loth to let the world know, what God hath laid upon us. Say to yourselves, These afflictions are for my sins, and say to one another, *Ego vir*, I am the man whom God hath thus and thus afflicted. For, as executions in criminal justice, are done as much for example of others, as for punishment of delinquents, so would God fain proceed that cheap way, to make those afflictions which he lays upon thee, serve another too; as they will, if thou be content to glorify God, in letting others know, how he hath afflicted thee. Shut we up this first branch of this first part (the extent and universality of afflictions) which we have considered first in the nature of the case, (we have all contributed to the afflictions of Christ, and therefore must all fulfil his sufferings in our flesh) and then secondly, in this name of exaltation, Gheber, (man, in the highest consideration of man, is the subject of affliction) and lastly, in the person of Jeremy, in whom we have made our use of those three observations; first, that no man is so necessary to God, as that God cannot be without him, then, that no man is excused of future calamities, by former, and lastly, that he whom God hath exercised with afflictions, is bound to glorify God in the declaration thereof; shut we up this branch, with that story of St. Ambrose, who, in a journey from Milan to Rome, passing some time in the evening with his host, and hearing him brag that he had never had any cross in his life, St. Ambrose presently removed from thence to another house, with that protestation, that either that man was very unthankful to God, that would not take knowledge of his corrections, or that God's measure was by this time full, and he would surely, and soundly, and suddenly pour down all together.

And so we pass to our other branch of this first part, from the extent and generality of afflictions, to the weight and vehemence of them, expressed in three heavy circumstances, that they are his, the Lord's, that they are from his rod, that they are from *the rod of his wrath: I am the man, that have seen afflictions, by the rod of his mouth.*

First, they are aggravated in that they are *Ejus, his*, the Lord's. It is ordinary in the Scriptures, that when the Holy Ghost would express a superlative, or the highest degree of anything, to express it, by adding to it, the name of God. So, in many places, *fortitudo Domini*, and *timor Domini*, The power of the Lord, and the fear of the Lord, do not import that power which is in the Lord, nor that fear which is to be conceived by us of the Lord, but the power of the Lord, and the fear of the Lord denote the greatest power, and the greatest fear that can be conceived. As in particular, when Saul and his company were in such a dead sleep, as that David could enter in upon them, and take his spear, and his pot of water from under his head, this is there called *sopor Domini, the sleep of the Lord was upon him*[20], the heaviest, the deadliest sleep that could be imagined. So may these afflictions in our text be conceived to be exalted to a superlative height, by this addition, that they, and the rod, and the wrath, are said to be his, the Lord's. But this cannot well be the sense, nor the direct proceeding, and purpose of the Holy Ghost, in this place, because where the addition of the name of God constitutes a superlative, that name is evidently and literally expressed in that place, as *fortitudo Dei*, *sopor Dei*, and the rest; but here, the name of God is only by implication, by illation, by consequence; all necessary, but yet but illation, but implication, but consequence. For, there is no name of God in this verse; but, because in the last verse of the former chapter, the Lord is expressly named, and the Lord's anger, and then, this which is the first verse of this chapter, and connected to that, refers these afflictions, and rods, and wrath to him, (the rod of his wrath) it must necessarily be to him who was last spoken of, the Lord, they are *ejus*, his, and therefore heavy.

Then is an affliction properly God's affliction, when thou in thy

[20] 1 Sam. xxvi. 12.

conscience canst impute it to none but God. When thou disorderest thy body with a surfeit, nature will submit to sickness; when thou wearest out thyself with licentiousness, the sin itself will induce infirmities; when thou transgressest any law of the state, the justice of the state will lay hold upon thee. And for the afflictions that fall upon thee in these cases, thou art able to say to thyself, that they would have fallen upon thee, though there had been no God, or though God had had no rod about him, no anger in him; thou knowest in particular, why, and by whose, or by what means, these afflictions light upon thee. But when thou shalt have thy conscience clear towards such and such men, and yet those men shall go about to oppress thee, when thou labourest uprightly in thy calling, and yet doeth not prosper, when thou studiest the Scriptures, hearkenest to sermons, observest Sabbaths, desirest conferences, and yet receivest no satisfaction, but still remainest under the torture of scruples and anxieties, when thou art in St. Paul's case, *Nihili conscius*[21], that thou knowest nothing by thyself, and yet canst not give thyself peace, though all afflictions upon God's children, be from him, yet, take knowledge that this is from him, more entirely, and more immediately, and that God remembers something in thee, that thou hast forgot; and, as that fit of an ague, or that pang of the gout, which may take thee to-day, is not necessarily occasioned by that which thou hast eaten to-day, but may be the effect of some former disorder, so the affliction which lights upon thee in thine age, may be inflicted for the sins of thy youth. Thy affliction is his, the Lord's; and the Lord is infinite, and comprehends all at once, and ever finds something in thee to correct, something that thou hast done, or something that thou wouldest have done, if the blessing of that correction had not restrained thee. And therefore, when thou canst not pitch thy affliction upon any particular sin, yet make not thyself so just, as that thou make God unjust, whose judgments may be unsearchable, but they cannot be unjust[22].

[21] 1 Cor. iv. 4. [This quotation is valuable as deciding the sense in which the words, *I know nothing of myself*, were understood. See vol. ii., page 574, note [11], which, however, was written in ignorance of the existence of this direct testimony.—ED.]

[22] Augustine.

This then is the first weight that is laid upon our afflictions, that they are his, the Lord's; and this weight consists in this, that because they are his, they are inevitable, they cannot be avoided, and because they are his, they are certainly just, and cannot be pleaded against, nor can we ease ourselves with any imagination of an innocency, as though they were undeserved. And the next weight that is laid upon them, is that they are, *in virga ejus, in his rod.* For, though this metaphor, the rod, may seem to present but an easy correction, such as that, *If thou beat thy child with a rod, he shall not die*[22], (it will not kill him) yet there is more weight than so in this rod; for the word here is *shebet*, and *shebet* is such a rod as may kill; *If a man smite his servant with a rod, so that he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished*[24]. Beloved, whether God's rod, and his correction, shall have the *savour of life unto life*, or *of death unto death*, consists much in the hand, that is to receive it, and in the stomach that is to digest it. As in God's temporal blessings that he rains down upon us, it is much in our gathering, and inning, and spending them, whether it shall be *frumenti*, or *laqueorum*, whether this shall prove such a shower, as shall nourish our soul spiritually, in thankfulness to God, and in charitable works towards his needy servants, or whether it shall prove *a shower of snares*[25], to minister occasions of temptations; so when he rains afflictions upon us, it is much in our gathering, whether it shall be *roris*, or *grandinis*, whether it shall be a shower of fattening dew upon us, or a shower of Egyptian hail-stones, to batter us in pieces, *as a potter's vessel, that cannot be renewed*[26]. Our murmuring makes a rod a staff, and a staff a sword, and that which God presented for physic, poison. The double effect and operation of God's rod, and corrections, is usefully and appliably expressed in the prophet Zechary[27]: where God complains, *That he had fed the sheep of slaughter*, that he had been careful for them, who would needs die, say he what he could. Therefore he was forced to come to the rod, to correction. So he does; *And I took unto me*, says he there, *two staves, the one I called Beauty, the other Bands;* two ways of correction, a milder, and a

[22] Prov. xxiii. 13. [24] Exod. xxi. 20. [25] Psalm xi. 6.
[26] Jer. xix. 11. [27] Zech. xi. 7.

more vehement. When his milder way prevailed not, Then said I, *I will not feed you;* I will take no more care of you; *That which dieth let it die,* (says he) and *that which is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and I took my staff of beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant, which I had made with them.* Beloved, God hath made no such covenant with any state, any church, any soul, but that, being provoked, he is at liberty to break it. But then, upon this, when the stubborn, and the refractory, the stiff-necked and the rebellious were cut off, *The poor of the sheep* (says God) *that waited upon me, knew that it was the word of the Lord.* It is not every man's case, to mend by God's corrections, only *the poor of the sheep*, the broken-hearted, the contrite spirit, the discerner of his own poverty and infirmity, could make that good use of affliction, as to find God's hand, and then God's purpose in it. For, this rod of God, this *shebet*, can kill; affliction can harden, as well as mollify, and entender the heart. And there is so much the more danger, that it should work that effect, that obduration, because it is *virga iræ, the rod of his wrath*, which is the other weight that aggravates our afflictions.

In all afflictions that fall upon us from other instruments, there is *digitus Dei*, the finger of God leads their hand that afflicts us; though it be sickness, by our intemperance, though it be poverty, by our wastefulness, though it be oppression, by the malice, or by our exasperation of potent persons, yet still the finger of God is in all these. But in the afflictions which we speak of here, such as fall upon us, when we think ourselves at peace with God, and in state of grace, it is not *digitus*, but *manus Dei*, the whole work is his, and man hath no part in it. Whensoever he takes the rod in hand, there is a correction towards; but yet, it may be but his rod of beauty, of his correction, not destruction. But, if he take his rod in anger, the case is more dangerous; for, though there be properly no anger in God, yet then is God said to do a thing in anger, when he does it so, as an angry man would do it. Upon those words of David, *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger*[28], St. Augustine observes, that David knew God's rebukes and corrections were but for his amendment; but

[28] Psalm vi. 1.

yet, *In ira corrigi noluit, in ira emendari noluit*, David was loth, that God should go about to mend him in anger; afraid to have anything to do with God, till his anger were over-passed. Beloved, to a true anger, and wrath, and indignation towards his children, God never comes; but he comes so near it, as that they cannot discern, whether it be anger, or no. A father takes a rod, and looks as angerly, as though he would kill his child, but means nothing but good to him. So God brings a soul to a sad sense of an angry countenance in God, to a sad apprehension of an angry absence, to a sad jealousy and suspicion that God will never return to it again; and this is a heavy affliction, whilst it lasts. Our Saviour Christ, in that case, came to expostulate it, to dispute it with his Father, *Ut quid dereliquisti, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Do but tell me *why*. For, if God be pleased to tell us, *why* he is angry, his anger is well allayed, and we have a fair overture towards our restitution. But, in our infirmity, we get not easily so far; we apprehend God to be angry; we cannot find the cause, and we sink under the burden; we leave the disease to concoct itself, and we take no physic. And this is truly the highest extent, and exaltation of affliction, that in our afflictions we take God to be angrier than he is. For then is God said to take his rod in anger, when he suffers us to think that he does so, and when he suffers us to decline, and sink so low towards diffidence, and desperation, that we dare not look towards him, because we believe him to be so angry. And so have you all those pieces which constitute both the branches of this first part, the generality and extent of afflictions, considered in the nature of the thing, in the nature of the word, this name of man, Gheber, and in the person of Jeremy, the prophet of God, and then the intenseness, and weight and vehemency of afflictions, considered in these three particulars, that they are his, the Lord's, that they are from his rod, and from the rod of his anger. But to weigh down all these, we have comforts ministered unto us, in our text, which constitute our other part.

Of these the first is *Vidi, I have seen these afflictions*, for this is an act of particular grace and mercy, when God enables us to see them: for, naturally this is the infirmity of our spiritual senses, that when the eyes of our understanding should be en-

lightened[29], our understanding is so darkened[30], as that we can neither see prosperity, nor adversity, for, in prosperity our light is too great, and we are dazzled, in adversity too little, none at all, and we are benighted, we do not see our afflictions. There is no doubt, but that the literal sense of this phrase, to see afflictions, is to feel, to suffer afflictions. As, when David says, *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death*[31], and when Christ says, *Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption*[32], to see death, and to see corruption, is to suffer them. But then, the literal sense being thus duly preserved, that the children of God shall certainly see, that is, certainly suffer afflictions, receive we also that sweet odour and fragrancy which the word breathes out, that they shall see it, that is, understand it, consider it: for, as when the wicked come to say, *The Lord does not see it*, it is presently added, *neither doth the God of Jacob regard it*[33], (it is a seeing that induces a regarding) so when the godly come to see their afflictions, they come to regard them, to regard God's purpose in them. *Vidisti Domine, ne sileas*, says David[34], *All this thou hast seen, O Lord, Lord do not hold thy peace.* David presumed, that if God saw his afflictions, he would stir in them; when we come to see them, we stir, we wake, we rise, we look about us, from whence, and why these afflictions come; and therein lies this comfort, *Vidi, I have seen* afflictions, I have been content to look upon them, to consider them.

The prophets in the Old Testament, do often call those sights, and those pre-notions which they had of the misery and destruction of others, *Onus visionis, onus verbi Domini, O the burden of this sight, O the burden of this message of God.* It was a burden to them, to see God's judgments directed upon others; how much more is it a burden to a man, to see his own affliction, and that in the cause thereof. But this must be done, we must see our affliction in the cause thereof. No man is so blind, so stupid, as that he doth not see his affliction, that is, feel it; but we must see it so, as to see through it, see it to be such as it is, so qualified, so conditioned, so circumstanced, as he that sends it, intends it. We must leave out the malice of others in our oppressions, and forgive

[29] Eph. i. 18. [30] Eph. iv. 18. [31] Psalm lxxxix. 48.
[32] Psalm xvi. 10. [33] Psalm xciv. 7. [34] Psalm xxxv. 22.

that; leave out the severity of the law in our punishments, and submit to that; and look entirely upon the certainty of God's judgment, who hath the whole body of our sins written together before him, and picks out what sin it pleaseth him, and punisheth now an old, now a yesterday's sin, as he findeth it most to conduce to his glory, and our amendment, and the edification of others, we must see the hand of God upon the wall as Belshazzar did[35], (for even that was the hand of God) though we cannot read that writing, no more than Belshazzar could. We must see the affliction, so as we must see it to be the hand of God, though we cannot presently see, for what sin it is, nor what will be the issue of it. And then when we have seen that, then we must turn to the study of those other particulars, for, till we see the affliction to come from God, we see nothing; there is no other light in that darkness, but he. If thou see thy affliction, thy sickness, in that glass, in the consideration of thine own former licentiousness, thou shalt have no other answer, but that sour remorse, and increpation, You might have lived honestly. If thou see thy affliction, thy poverty, in that glass, in the malice and oppression of potent adversaries, thou wilt get no farther, than to that froward and churlish answer, *The law is open, mend yourself as you can.* But *Jactate super Dominum*, saith David, *Lay all thy burden upon the Lord*[36], and he will apply to thee that collyrium, that sovereign eye-salve[37], whereby thou shalt see thy affliction, (it shall not blind thee) and see from whence it cometh, (from him, who, as he liveth, would not the death of a sinner) and see why it cometh, (that thou mightest see and taste the goodness of God thyself, and declare his loving kindness to the children of men.) And this is the comfort deduced from this word *Vidi, I have seen affliction.*

And this leadeth us to our other comfort, that though these afflictions have wrought deep upon thee, yet thou canst say to thy soul, *Ego vir, I am that man;* thy morality, thy Christianity is not shaken in thee. *It is the mercy of God that we are not consumed*, saith Jeremy here; and it is a great degree of his mercy, to let us feel that we are not consumed, to give us this sense, that our case is not desperate, but that *Ego vir, I am the*

[35] Dan. v. 5. [36] Psalm LV. 22. [37] Rev. iii. 18.

man, that there remaineth still strength enough to gather more; that still thou remainest a man, a reasonable man, and so art able to apply to thyself, all those medicines and reliefs, which philosophy and natural reason can afford. For, even these helps, deduced from philosophy and natural reason, are strong enough against afflictions of this world, as long as we can use them, as long as these helps of reason and learning are alive, and awake, and actuated in us, they are able to sustain us from sinking under the afflictions of this world, for, they have sustained many a Plato, and Socrates, and Seneca in such cases. But when part of the affliction shall be, that God worketh upon the spirit itself, and damps that, enfeebles that, that he casts a sooty cloud upon the understanding, and darkens that, that he doth *exuere hominem*, divest, strip the man of the man, *eximere hominem*, take the man out of the man, and withdraw and frustrate his natural understanding so, as that, to this purpose, he is no man, yet even in this case, God may mend thee, in marring thee, he may build thee up in dejecting thee, he may infuse another, *ego vir*, another manhood into thee, and though thou canst not say *Ego vir, I am that moral man*, safe in my natural reason and philosophy, that is spent, yet *Ego vir*, I am that Christian man, who have seen this affliction in the cause thereof, so far off, as in my sin in Adam, and the remedy of this affliction, so far off, as in the death of Christ Jesus I am the man, that cannot repine, nor murmur, since I am the cause; I am the man that cannot despair, since Christ is the remedy. I am that man, which is intended in this text, Gheber. Not only an Adam, a man amongst men, able to convince me, though they speak eloquently against me, and able to prove that God hath forsaken me, because he hath afflicted me[38], but able to prevail with God himself, as Jacob did, and to wrestle out a blessing out of him[39], and, though I do halt, become infirm with manifold afflictions, yet they shall be so many seals of my infallibility in him. Now this comfort hath three gradations in our text, three circumstances, which, as they aggravated the discomfort in the former, so they exalt the comfort in this part, that they are his, the Lord's, that they are from his rod, that they are from the rod of his wrath.

[38] Job viii. 20. [39] Gen. xxxii. 24.

We may compare our afflictions that come immediately from God, with those that come instrumentally from others, by considering the choice and election which David made, and the choice which Susanna made in her case. The prophet Gad offers David his choice of three afflictions, war, famine, or pestilence[40]. It does not appear, it is not expressed, that David determined himself, or declared his choice of any of the three. He might conceive a hope, that God would forbear all three. As, when another prophet Nathan had told him, *The child shall surely die*[41], yet David said, for all that determined assurance, *Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live*, and he fasted a fast, and mourned and prayed for the child's life; beloved, no commination of God, is unconditioned, or irrevocable. But in this case David intimates some kind of election, *Let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are exceeding great, and not into the hands of men.* Susanna, when she was surprised, (and in a strait too, though of another kind) she resolves that it is better for her to fall into the hands of men, (let men defame her, let men accuse her, condemn her, execute her) rather than sin in the sight of God, and so fall into his hands. So that, if we compare offences, we were better offend all the princes of the earth, than offend God, because he is able to cast body and soul into hell-fire. But when the offence is done, for the punishment which follows, God forgives a treason, sooner than thy neighbour will a trespass; God seals thee a *quietus est*, in the blood of his Son, sooner than a creditor will renew a bond, or withdraw an action; and a *scandalum magnatum*, will lie longer upon thee here, than a blasphemy against God, in that court. And therefore, as it is one degree of good husbandry, in ill husbands, to bring all their debts into one hand, so dost thou husband thy afflictions well, if thou put them all upon thy debts to God, and leave out the consideration of instruments; and he shall deal with thee, as he did with David there, that plague, which was threatened for three days, he will end in one[42]; in that trouble, which, if men had had their will upon thee, would have consumed thee, thou shalt stand unconsumed. For, if a man wound

[40] 2 Sam. xxiv. [41] 2 Sam. xii. 14. [42] 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.

thee, it is not in his power, though he be never so sorry for it, whether that wound shall kill thee, or no; but if the Lord wound thee to death, he is the life, he can redeem thee from death, and if he do not, he is thy resurrection, and recompenses thee with another, and a better life. And so lies our first comfort, that it is *ejus, his*, the Lord's, and a second is, that it is *in virga ejus, in his rod.*

Job would fain have come to a cessation of arms, before he came to a treaty with God: *Let the Lord take away his rod from me*, says he, *and let not his fear terrify me; then would I speak*[43]. As long as his rod was upon him, and his fears terrified him, it was otherwise; he durst not. But truly his fears should not terrify us, though his rod be upon us; for herein lies our comfort, that all God's rods are bound up with that mercy, which accompanied that rod that God threatened David, to exercise upon his son Solomon, *If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men*[44]; (I will let him fall into the hands of men) this was heavy; therefore it is eased with that cordial, *But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul.* But for this mercy, the oppressions of men were merciless; but all God's rods are bound up with this mercy; and therein lies our comfort. And for the rods of other men, *O my people be not afraid of the Assyrian*[45], says God. Why, blessed Lord, shall the Assyrian do thy people no harm? Yes, says God there, *He shall smite them with a rod, and he shall lift up his staff against them;* some harm he shall do; (he shall smite them with a rod) and he shall threaten more, offer at more (he shall lift up his staff) where then is the people's relief, and comfort? In this; *The Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him.* God shall appear in that notion of power, the Lord of hosts, and he shall encounter his enemies, and the enemies of his friends, with a scourge upon them, against their rod upon us. God's own rods are bound up in mercy, (they end in mercy) and, for the rods of other men, God cuts them in pieces, and their owners, with his sword. God's own rods, even towards his own children, are sometimes, as that rod which he put into Moses' hand was,

[43] Job ix. 34. [44] 2 Sam. vii. 14. [45] Isaiah x. 24.

changed into serpents[45]. God's own rods have sometimes a sting, and a bitterness in them; but then they are changed from their own nature; naturally God's rods towards us, are gentle, and harmless: when God's rod in Moses' hand, was changed to a serpent, it did no harm, that did but devour the other serpents: when God's rods are heaviest upon us, if they devour other rods, that is, enable us to put off the consideration of the malice and oppression of other men, and all displeasure towards them, and lay all upon God, for our sins, these serpentine rods have wrought a good effect: when Moses' rod was a serpent, yet it returned quickly to a rod again; how bitter soever God's corrections be, they return soon to their natural sweetness, and though the correction continue, the bitterness does not: with this rod Moses tamed the sea, and divided that; but he drowned none in that sea, but the Egyptians. God's rod will cut, and divide between thy soul, and spirit, but he will destroy nothing in thee, not thy morality, not thy Christianity, but only thine own Egyptians, thy persecutors, thy concupiscences.

But all this while, we have but deduced a comfort out of thy word, *Quia virga*, though that be a rod; but this is a comfort *Quia verga*, therefore, because that is a rod: for, this word which is here a rod, is also, in other places of Scripture, an instrument, not of correction, but direction: *Feed thy sheep with thy rod*[46], says God; and there it is a pastoral rod, the direction of the church; *Virga rectitudinis verga regni tui*, says David; *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*[47]; and there is a royal rod, the protection of the state: so that all comforts that are derived upon us, by the direction of the church, and by the protection of the state, are recommended to us, and conferred upon us in this his rod. Nor is it only a rod of comfort, by implication, and consequence; but expressly and literally it is so: *Though I should walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; thy rod, and thy staff, they comfort me*[48]. He had not only a comfort, though he had the rod, but he had not had so much comfort, except he had had it; we have not so good evidence of the joys of the next life, except we have the sorrows of this.

[45] Exod. vii. 12.
[46] Mich. vii. 14.
[47] Psalm XLV. 6.
[48] Psalm xxiii. 4.

The discomfort then lies not in this, that the affliction is *ejus*, his, the Lord's, (for we have an ease in that) nor, that it is *In virga ejus*, In his rod, (for we have a benefit by that, (but it is *In virga iræ*, in that it is the rod of his wrath, of his anger. But truly, beloved, there is a blessed comfort ministered unto us, even in that word; for that word *gnabar*[49], which we translate anger, wrath, hath another ordinary signification in Scripture, which, though that may seem to be an easier, would prove a heavier sense for us to bear, than this of wrath and anger; this is, *preteritio, conniventia*, God's forbearing to take knowledge of our transgressions; when God shall say of us, as he does of Israel, *Why should ye be smitten any more*[50]? when God leaves us to ourselves, and studies our recovery no farther, by any more corrections; for, in this case, there is the less comfort, because there is the less anger showed. And therefore St. Bernard, who was heartily afraid of this sense of our word, heartily afraid of this preterition, that God should forget him, leave him out, affectionately, passionately embraces this sense of the word in our text, anger; and he says, *Irascaris mihi Domine, Domine mihi irascaris, Be angry with me O Lord, O Lord be angry with me, lest I perish!* for, till we have a sense of such an anger in God, towards us, as children have from their parents, that not only they correct them, but deny them some things that they ask, and keep them some time from their sight and presence, till we be made partakers of this blessed anger of God, (for we do not pray, that God would not be angry, but that he would not be angry with us for ever) till then we come not to see an affliction, that is, to discern, what, and whence, and why that comes: nor we see that not like men, like such men, like Christian men, not with a faithful and constant assurance, that all will have an end in him who suffered infinitely more for us, than he hath laid upon us.

[49] עברה [50] Isaiah i. 5.

SERMON CXXX.

PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S UPON NEW-YEAR'S DAY, 1624.

GENESIS xvii. 24.

Abraham himself was ninety-nine years old, when the foreskin of his flesh was circumcised.

THIS is the place where circumcision began, and this is the day, when circumcision ended; in this Scripture it was instituted, in the person of Abraham; and upon this day it was perfected and consummated in the person of Christ Jesus: for, though circumcision were admitted in a few cases, in the apostles' time, after Christ, yet that was, as dead herbs are re-admitted into medicines in the winter, when fresh and green herbs cannot be had of that kind: so circumcision was sometimes admitted for peace, and to avoid scandal, and the better to propagate the church, after the virtue thereof was extinguished in Christ. In the institution thereof in this text, we will consider Abraham's ready, and exact obedience: in the consummation thereof, in the person of Christ, we will consider that, to which, this circumcision had relation, that is, the spiritual circumcision of our hearts. It is a text well handled, and it is a day well spent, if the text teach us to obey God readily, and immediately, what inconveniences soever present themselves in the way, and if the celebration of the day, teach us to come this day, to that which is the true circumcision, the circumcision of the heart. In the first, in Abraham's example, we shall pass by these steps: first, that though there be allowed to us an *omnia probate*, a trial of all things, and a spirit to discern spirits; yet when once it appears to us, to be a commandment of God, there is a fine levied, all title concluded, no more claim to be made by our understanding, our reason, but a present, and an exact obedience must be given to it. Secondly, that in particular men, and in particular cases, there may arise temptations, objections, reasons, why a man might forbear altogether, or at least defer the execution of such a commandment, as there may have done in Abraham's case, as

we shall see anon. Thirdly, that though such temptations do arise in us out of our infirmities, yet God gives his children strength to overcome those difficulties, and to oppose stronger reasons against those reasons, and so to come to a willing obedience to his will. And then lastly, the triumph that belongs to this victory; which we shall find in considering what benefit Abraham received by this obedience in his circumcision: and these will be the branches of our first part, rising out of the institution of circumcision, in the person of Abraham at that great age, first, that God's manifest will, must not be disputed, nor reasoned upon: secondly, that man's corrupt nature will offer reasons against it: thirdly, that God will give the issue with the temptation, reason above that reason: and lastly, he will accompany that victory, with other blessings too.

First then, for our exact obedience to that which God exacts of us, it is well said by Luther, *Depuerascendum est, cum agitur de obedientia Dei:* when the question is, whether this, or this be commanded by God or no, when traditions and additions of men, are imposed upon us, as commandments of God, here is no *depuerascendum* in this case, this is no child's-play; then, *Viriliter agendum*, (as the apostle speaks) we must quit ourselves like men, we must dispute like men, (like learned men) preach like men, (like zealous men) pray like men, (like devout men) resist like men, (like valiant men) or at least, (in cases where we may not resist) suffer like men, (like constant Christian men.) But when the question is, *De obedientia Dei*, that this is agreed to be the will of God, and all the question is, whether God might not be content to accept an obedience to some part of it, or to all of that hereafter, but not now, whether God would not forgive the debt, or at least give day for the payment of it; either when we are old, or by legacies to pious uses, when we die, when this is the question, *Depuerascendum est*, we must grow children again: we must not only, not argue, not dispute against it (which are acts of men, of strong and able understandings) but we must return to the first weakness of children, to be speechless, to be thoughtless; we must not utter a word, not conceive a thought against it, *Periculosa et pestilens quæstio, quare;* says Luther also, It is a dangerous and infectious monosyllable, how or why:

if I will ask a reason, why God commands such a thing; first, *Periculosum est*, It is dangerous; for, I have nothing to answer me, but mine own reason, and that affords not lead enough, nor line enough, to sound the depth of God's proceedings, nor length enough, nor strength enough to reach so far, and therefore I may mistake the reason, and go upon false grounds. So, *Periculosum est*, It is a dangerous question, and a lost question, because I can have no certain answer; and it is an infectious question too, for here is one coal of the devil's fire, of his pride, kindled in me; as the devil said, *Similis ero altissimo, I will be like the Highest*, and see whether I may not stand by myself, without any influence from God, without any dependence upon God: so, in our case, I will be so far equal to God, as that I will measure his actions by my reason, and not do his commandments till I know why he commanded them: and then, when the infection is got into a house, who can say, it shall end here in this person, and kill no more; or it shall end this week, and last no longer? So if that infectious inquisition, that *quare*, (why should God command this or this particular?) be entered into me, all my humility is presently infected, and I shall look for a reason, why God made a world, or why he made a world no sooner than six thousand years ago, and why he saved some, and why but some, and I shall examine God upon all the interrogatories that I can frame, upon the creed, (why I should believe a Son of a Virgin without a man, or believe the Son of God to descend into hell) or frame upon the *Pater noster*, (why I should worship such a God, that must be prayed to, not to lead me into temptation) or frame upon the Ten Commandments, why after all is done and heaped, for any sinful action, yet I should be guilty of all, for coveting in my heart another man's horse or house. And therefore Luther pursues it farther, with words of more vehemence, *Odiosa et exitialis vocula, quare*, It is an execrable and damnable monosyllable, why; it exasperates God, ruins us: for, when we come to ask a reason of his actions, either we doubt of the goodness of God, that he is not so careful of us, as we would be; or of his power, that he cannot provide for us, so well as we could do; or of his wisdom, that he hath not grounded his commandments so well as we could have advised him: whereas St. Augustine says

justly, *Qui rationem quærit voluntatis Dei, aliquid majus Deo quærit*, He that seeks a reason of the will of God, seeks for something greater than God. It was the devil that opened our eyes in paradise, it is our parts to shut them so far, as not to gaze upon God's secret purposes. God guided his children as well by a pillar of cloud, as by a pillar of fire, and both, cloud and fire, were equally pillars: there is as much strength in, and as safe relying upon some ignorances, as some knowledges; for God provided for his people, as well in this, that he hid Moses' body from them, as that he revealed other mysteries to them, by him. All is well summed and collected by St. Augustine, *Dominus cur jusserit, viderit; faciendum est à serviente, quod jusserit:* Why God commands anything, God himself knows; our part is, not to inquire why, but to do what he commands.

This is the rule: it is true, there should not be: but yet is there not sometimes, in the minds and mouths of good and godly men, a *quare*, a reasoning, a disputing against that which God hath commanded or done? The murmuring of the children in the desert, had still this *Quare, quare eduxisti, Wherefore have you brought us hither to die here*, in this miserable place, *where there is no seed, no figs, no vines, no pomegranates, no water*[1]? Saul had this *quare*, this rebellious inquisition, upon that commandment of God against the Amalekites, *Slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass*[2]: and from this *quare*, from this disputation of his, arose that conclusion, that it were better to spare some for sacrifice, than to destroy all: but though his pretence had a religious colour, that would not justify a slackness in obeying the manifested will of God; for, for this, God repented that he made him king, and told him that he had more pleasure in obedience, than in sacrifice. But, to come to better men than the Israelites in the wilderness, or Saul in his government, Job, though he, and his friends held out long, (they sate upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spoke a word) yet at last fell into these *quares, Why did I not die in the birth? or, Why sucked I the breast?* Peter himself had this reluctation; and though that were out of piety, yet he was chidden for it, *Quare lavas*, says he, *Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Thou*

[1] Numb. xx. 5. [2] 1 Sam. xv. 3.

shalt never wash my feet[3]: till Christ was fain to say, *If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me.*

Upon this common infirmity; inherent in the best men that may (and not unlikely) be, that when God commanded Abraham, at that great age to circumcise himself, there might arise such *quares*, such scruples and doubts, as there, in Abraham's mind, (for, as St. Paul says of himself, *If any man think he hath whereof to trust in the flesh, much more I, circumcised, an Hebrew, an Israelite, a Pharisee, a zealous servant in the persecution, and in righteousness unblameable*[4]:) so if any man might have taken this liberty to have disputed with God, upon his precepts, Abraham might have done it; for, when God called him out to number the stars[5], (which was, even to art, impossible) and promised him, that his seed should equal them, (which was, in nature, incredible) for all this incredibility and impossibility, Abraham believed, and this was accounted to him for righteousness: and Abraham had declared his easy, and forward, and implicit faith in God, when God called him, and he went out, not knowing whither he went[6]: and therefore when God offered him a new seal, circumcision, Abraham might have said, *Quare sigillum?* What needs a seal between thee and me? I have used to take thy word before, and thou hast tried me before: but Abraham knew that obedience was better than wit or disputation; for, though obedience and good works, do not beget faith, yet they nurse it; *Per ea augescit fides, et pinguescit*, says Luther, Our faith grows into a better state, and into a better liking, by our good works.

Again, when Abraham considered, that it was, *mandatum in re turpi*, that this circumcision, in itself, was too frivolous a thing; and, in that part of the body, too obscene a thing, to be brought into the fancy of so many women, so many young men, so many strangers to other nations, as might bring the promise and covenant itself into scorn, and into suspicion, that should require such a seal to it as that was, he might have come to this, *Quare tam turpe, quare tam sordidum?* Why does God command me so base and unclean a thing, so scornful and mis-interpretable a thing, as circumcision, and circumcision in that part? Again, when he considered, that

[3] John xiii. 6. [4] Phil. iii. 4, 5, 6. [5] Gen. xv. 5. [6] Heb. xi. 8.

to circumcise all his family in one day, (as by the commandment he must) which could not be (in likelihood) of less than four hundred, (for he went out before, to the rescue of Lot, with three hundred and eighteen born and brought up in his house[7]) he must make his house a spital of so many impotent persons, unable to help one another for many days, (for such was the effect of circumcision, as we see in their story, when Simeon and Levi came upon the Shechemites three days after they had been, by their persuasion, circumcised, the Shechemites were unable to resist or defend themselves, and so were slain[8]: Yea the soreness and incommodity upon circumcision was so great, as that the very commandment itself of circumcision, was forborne in the wilderness, because they were then put to sudden removes, which presently after a circumcision, they could not have performed) might not Abraham have come to his *Quare tam molestum?* Why will God command me so troublesome and incommodious a thing as this? And (to contract this) when he considered, that one principal reason of the commandment of circumcision, was, that that mark might be always a remembrance to them against intemperance and incontinency. Might not Abraham have come to his *Quare mihi?* What use is there of this, in my body, which is now dried up and withered by ninety-nine years? What *quares*, what reluctations Abraham had, or whether he had any or no, is not expressed; but very religious and good men, sometimes, out of human infirmities, have them: but then, God brings them quickly about to Christ's *Veruntamen, Yet not my will, but thine be done;* and he delivers them from the temptation, and brings them to an entire obedience to his will, which is that which we proposed for the next branch in this part.

Tu qui vas figuli, says the apostle; whensoever any disputation against a commandment of God, arises in God's children, the Spirit of God smothers that spirit of rebellion with that, *Tu qui vas figuli*, Wilt thou who art but the vessel, dispute with the potter, that fashioned thee? If Abraham had any such doubts, of a frivolousness in so base a seal, of an obscenity in so foul a seal, of an incommodiousness in so troublesome a seal, of a needlessness in so impertinent a seal; if he had these doubts, no doubt

[7] Gen. xiv. 14. [8] Gen. xxxiv. 25.

but his forwardness in obeying God, did quickly oppose these reasons to those, and overcome them: that part of the body is the most rebellious part; and that that therefore, only that part Adam covered, out of shame, for all the other parts he could rule; *Ad hominis inobedientiam redarguendam, suâ inobedientiâ quodammodo caro testimonium perhibet*[9], To reproach man's rebellion to God, God hath left one part of man's body, to rebel against him; for though the seeds of this rebellion be dispersed through all the body, yet, *In illa parte magis regnat additamentum leviathan*, says St. Bernard, The spawns of leviathan, the seed of sin, the leaven of the devil, abound and reigns most in that part of the body; it is *sentina peccati*, says the same father, the sewer of all sin; not only because all sin is derived upon us, by generation, and so implied, and involved in original sin; but because, almost all other sins have relation to this: for, gluttony is a preparation to this sin in ourselves; pride and excess is a preparation to it, in others, whom we would inveigle and allure, by our bravery; anger and malice inclines us to pursue this sinful and inordinate love, quarrelsomely, so, as, that then, we do not quarrel for ways, and walls in the street, but we quarrel for our way to the devil; and we cannot go fast enough to the devil, by wantonness in the chamber, we will quarrel with him, who hinders us of our damnation, and find a way, to go faster in the field, by duels, and unchristian murder, in so foul a cause, as unlawful lust. In this rebellious part, is the root of all sin, and therefore did that part need this stigmatical mark of circumcision, to be imprinted upon it. Besides, (for the Jews in particular) they were a nation prone to idolatry, and most, upon this occasion, if they mingled themselves with women of other nations: and therefore, *Dedit est signum, ut admoverentur de generatione pura*, says St. Chrysostom, God would be at the cost even of a sacrament, (which is the greatest thing that passes between God and man next to his word) to defend them thereby against dangerous alliances, which might turn their hearts from God; God imprinted a mark in that part, to keep them still in mind of that law, which forbade them foreign marriages, or any company of strange women: *Custodia pietati servandæ, ne macularent paternam nobi-*

[9] Augustine.

litatem[10], lest they should degenerate from the nobility of their race, God would have them carry this memorial about them, in their flesh. And God foresaw that extreme idolatry, that gross idolatry, which that nation would come to, and did come to, when Maachah the mother of Asa[11] worshipped that idol, which St. Hierome calls Belphegor, and is not fit to be named by us; and therefore, in foresight of that idolatry, God gave this mark, and this mutilation upon this part. If Abraham were surprised with any suggestions, any half-reasons against this commandment, he might quickly recollect himself, and see, that circumcision was first, *Signum memorativum, et monimentum isti fœderis*, It was a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham[12]; the covenant was the Messias, who being to come, by a carnal continuance of Abraham's race, the sign and seal was conveniently placed in that part. And that was secondly, *Signum representativum*, it represented baptism, *In Christ you are circumcised*, says the apostle, *in that you are buried with him, through baptism*[13]: and then, that was, *Signum distinctivum;* for, besides that it kept them from idolatry, as the Greeks called all nations, whom they despised, *barbares*, barbarians, so did the Jews, *incircumcisos*, uncircumcised: and that was a great threatening in the prophet, *Thou shalt die the death of the uncircumcised*[14]; that is, without any part in the everlasting promise, and covenant. But yet, the principal dignity of this circumcision, was, that it was *Signum figurativum*, it prefigured, it directed to that circumcision of the heart; *Circumcise the foreskin of your heart, for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords*[15]. And for all the other reasons that couid be assigned, of remembrance, of representation, of distinction, *Caret ubique ratione Judaica carnis circumcisio*, (says Lactantius) *nisi quod est circumcisionis figura, quæ est cor mundum:* The Jewish circumcision were an absurd and unreasonable thing, if it did not intimate and figure the circumcision of the heart: and that is our second part of this exercise: but before we come to that, we are to say a word of the fourth branch of this part, that as there is no *quære* to be made nor admitted against God, (which

[10] Theodoret. [11] 1 Kings xv. 13. [12] Gen. 17.
[13] Colos. ii. 12. [14] Ezek. xxviii. 10. [15] Deut. x. 16, 17.

was our first part) if man, out of his infirmity, do fall into that, (which was our second) God provides and furnishes them with reasons against those reasons, (which was our third.) And then God rewards their fighting of that battle, (which is his own work) with victories, and crowns, and blessings here; (which must be our fourth branch.)

Of examples of this, the book of God is full: but we contract ourselves only to that, which God did to Abraham at this time. in contemplation of this obedience. We consider Abraham at the end of one age, he was almost one hundred and ninety-nine when he was circumcised; and now was entering into another age, (for he lived seventy-five years after this:) this therefore was as the eve of his New-year's day, and God presents him thus many New-year's gifts; first, he gives him a new name; in which change of his name, from Abram to Abraham, (besides that he was changed from *pater magnus*, to *pater multitudinis*, from the father of a great possession and family, to the father of a great succession and posterity, for that diminishes any greatness to have no posterity to leave that to) this also arises to be noted, that God's name Jehovah, having in that two letters of one kind, (H), God divides with his servant, God affords one of those letters to the dignifying of Abraham's name, he adds an *h* of his own name to his: Jehovah is his essential name; and in communicating any beam of that essence, any letter of that name, we become *semen Dei*, the seed of God; and *filii Dei*, the sons of God; and *participes divinæ naturæ*, partakers of the divine nature; and *idem spiritus cum Domino*, the same spirit with the Lord; and hearers of that voice; *Ego dixi, dii estis*, I have said you are gods: if we were careful to answer our old name, the name of Christians, in our conformity to Christ, and performance of Christianly duties, that were well, and other names needed not, as remembrancers unto us: but God does gives us new names and additions of offices, and titles in school, or court, or commonwealth, as new testimonies of his love, and rebukes of our former negligences, and remembrancers of our present duties in those places, and encouragers to a more careful proceeding in them. Secondly, God gave Abraham a new wife: in which, the blessing was, that he took not from him that virtuous and obe-

dient wife which he had before, Sarah, but now he made her a wife unto him, and he supplied that only defect which was in her, barrenness, and so made her fully a wife, a mother. Thirdly, he gave him a new son; for, God who purposed to bless all nations in Abraham's seed, would not only repair and furnish his old house, (that is, bless Ismael with temporal blessings) but he would build him a new house, raise him up a new son, Isaac: he would not only fulfil that petition of Abraham's, O that Ismael might live in thy sight! not only preserve Ismael, which signifies, *Exauditionem Domini*, that the Lord had heard that prayer, in the behalf of Ismael; but he would give him an Isaac, which signifies, *Risum lætitiam*, that is, he would give him a new, and true occasion of joy. Fourthly, he gave him a new promise; that as in Adam he had promised a Messias, *in semine mulieris, in the seed of the woman;* now he contracts that promise to Abraham, *in semine tuo, in thy seed shall all nations be blessed;* and so makes Abraham, not only a partner with his other children, in the salvation of that Messias, but he makes Abraham a means to derive that salvation upon others also, *In semine tuo*, thou shalt not only be blessed in the seed of the woman, but all nations shall be blessed in thy seed. And lastly, he gives him a new seal; not only that seal, under which he was wont to deal with him, not only an inward seal in his heart, but he gives him a new seal, a visible seal, the seal of circumcision. This being then the dignity of God's precepts, that they require a present, and an exact obedience, without any counter-disputing; this being the infirmity of man's nature, that he is ever ready to object and oppose reasons, according to flesh and blood, against God's precepts; this being the overflowing measure of God's mercy to his children, to give them the issue with the temptation; reason above that reason, victory at last, and alacrity in the performance of that precept; and this being his infinite bounty, to give us such rewards and retributions for those victories, of which, only his goodness, and his strength, was the author in us, when we do perform those duties, (all which we have seen in Abraham's obedience to a fleshly circumcision) that circumcision being come to an end in the circumcision of Christ, performed this day: let us come to this circumcision, of which that was but a figure, a

spiritual circumcision, the circumcision of the heart, and God shall give us new names (new demonstrations, that our names are written in the book of life and new marriages (refresh his promise in the prophet, that he will marry himself to us for ever) and new sons, new Isaacs (assurance of new joys, essential and accidental, in the kingdom of heaven, and inchoative here in the way) and new promises, and new seals (new obligations of his blessed Spirit) that that infallibility of salvation which we have conceived, is well grounded.

We have done with our first part, with that which was occasioned by the institution of circumcision in Abraham; we pass to that, which is occasioned by the celebrating of this day, in which this legal circumcision taking an end, in the person of Christ, we come aptly to consider spiritual circumcision, by which only we can be made conformable to our pattern and example, Christ Jesus: in which, we will charge your memory but with these two considerations; first, *quid sit*, what this spiritual circumcision is, (for in that is implied the *quomodo*, how this circumcision is to be wrought and effected) and secondly, the *ubi*, what part of a man is to be circumcised in this circumcison, for that implies *integritatem*, that it is the whole man in every part.

Briefly then, spiritual circumcision is to *walk in the spirit; for then*, says the apostle, *ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*[16]; no circumcision can bring us to this, that we shall not have them, for they are born in us, and they will live in us, whilst we live; but this is this circumcision, not to fulfil them. Neither was Abraham's race, which was to be circumcised, more numerous, more plentiful, more manifold, than is this issue of the flesh, sin: how sudden, and how large a pedigree! A child, at the first minute, when the soul enters, is as good a sinner, that is, as absolute a sinner, and hath as good title to damnation, by being conceived in sin, as the eldest man; nay, he is as old a sinner as the eldest man that is; nay, as the eldest man that ever was; for he sinned in Adam, and, though conceived but this night, sinned six thousand years ago. In young men, vanity begets excess; excess, licentiousness; licentiousness, envy, hatred, quarrels, murders; so that here is generation upon generation,

[16] Gal. v. 16.

here are risen grandfather and great-grandfather sins quickly, a froward generation: and then they grow suddenly to be habits, and they come to prescribe in us: prescription is, when there is no memory to the contrary; and we cannot remember when that sinful custom begun in us: yea, our sins come to be reverenced in us, and by us; our sins contract a majesty, and a state, and they grow sacred to us; we dare not trouble a sin, we dare not displace it, nor displease it; we dare not dispute the prerogative of our sin, but we come to think it a kind of sedition, a kind of innovation, and a troubling of the state, if we begin to question our conscience, or change that security of sin which we sleep in, and we think it an easier reformation to repent a sin once a year, at Easter, when we must needs receive, than to watch a sin every day.

There is scarce any sin, but that in that place of the apostle to the Galatians, it comes within the name of *works of the flesh;* for, though he names divers sins, which are literally and properly works of the flesh, (as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, wantonness) yet those sins that are against a man's ownself, (as gluttony and drunkenness) those that are against other men, (as contentions and murders) those that are directed upon new gods (as idolatry) those that are contracts with the devil (as witchcraft) those that are offences to the church (as heresy) are all called by St. Paul in that place, *works of the flesh:* so that the object of this spiritual circumcision is all that concerns the flesh, the world, the devil, or God, or man, or the church; in every one of these we may find somewhat to circumcise. But because abundance and superfluity begets these works of the flesh, (for though we carry the serpent about us, yet he does not sting, nor hiss, till he be warm: as long as poverty and wretchedness freezes our concupiscences, they are not so violent) therefore spiritual circumcision is well expressed by St. Bernard, *Moralis circumcisio est, victum et vestitum habentem, esse contentum;* A cutting off of these superfluities, is this moral, that is, this spiritual circumcision.

Now for some understanding of these superfluities, we must consider, that sometimes a poor man, that hath no superfluity in his estate, is yet wasteful in his mind, and puts himself to super-

fluous expenses, in his diet, in his apparel, and in all things of outward show and ostentation: and on the other side, a covetous man, that hath a superfluous estate, yet starves himself, and denies himself all conveniences for this life: here is a superfluous confidence in the one, that he cannot want, though he throw away money; and here is a superfluous fear in the other, that he shall want, if he give himself bread; and here is work for this spiritual circumcision on both sides: but then the circumcision is not necessarily to be applied to the riches of the rich man, so as that every rich man must necessarily cast away his riches (a godly man may be rich) nor necessarily applied so to all outward expenses of the free and liberal-minded man, as that he should shut up doors, and wear rags; for, a godly man may fare in his diet, and appear in his garments, according to that degree which he holds in that state: but the superfluity is, and (consequently the circumcision is to be) in the affection, in our confidence, that whatsoever we waste, by one means or other, we shall have more; or in our diffidence, that if we lay not up all, we shall never have enough. These be the inordinate affections that must be circumcised: But how? For that is intended in this part. We need inquire no farther, for the means of this spiritual circumcision, than to the very word which the Holy Ghost hath chosen for circumcision here, which is *mul* and *namal;* for that word hath in other places of Scripture, three significations, that express much of the manner, how this circumcision is to be wrought: it signifies, *purgare*, to purge, to discharge the conscience: (and that is, by confession of our sins) it signifies, *mundare*, to cleanse and purify the conscience: (and that is, by contrition and detestation of that sin) and it signifies, *succidere*, to cut down, to weed and root out whatsoever remains in our possession, that is unjustly got (and that is) by destitution.

Now for the first of these, the purging; the proper use and working of purging physic, is, not that that medicine pierces into those parts of the body, where the peccant humour lies, and from which parts, nature, of herself, is not able to expel it: the substance of the medicine does not go thither, but the physic lies still, and draws those peccant humours together; and being then so come to an unsupportable mass, and burden, nature herself,

and their own weight expels them out. Now, that which nature does in a natural body, grace does in a regenerate soul, for grace is the nature and the life of a regenerate man. As therefore the bodily physic goes not to that part of the body that is affected; we must not stay till our spiritual physic (the judgments of God) work upon that particular sin, that transports us: that God should weaken me with a violent sickness, before I will purge myself of my licentiousness; or strike me with poverty, and loss of my stock, before I will purge myself of my usury; or lay me flat with disgraces and disfavours of great persons, before I will purge myself of my ambition; or evict my land from me, by some false title, that God, in his just judgment, may give way to, to punish my sins, before I will purge myself of my oppression, and racking of tenants: but before these violent medicines come, if thou canst take God's ordinary physic, administered in the word and sacraments; if thou canst but endure that qualm of calling thyself to an account, and an examination; if thou canst draw all thy sins together, and present them to thine own conscience, then their own weight will find a vent, and thou wilt utter them in a full and free confession to thy God, and that is circumcision; as circumcision consists in the purging of the conscience, to be moved upon hearing the word preached, and the denouncing of his judgments in his ordinance, before those judgments surprise thee, to recollect thy sins in thine own memory, and pour them out in a true confession.

The next step in this circumcision, (as they are intimated in that word, which the Holy Ghost uses here) is *mundare*, to cleanse; and this is a contrition for those sins, and a detestation of those sins, which I have thus gathered in my memory, and poured out in my confession. A house is not clean, though all the dust be swept together, if it lie still in a corner, within doors; a conscience is not clean, by having recollected all her sins in the memory, for they may fester there, and gangrene even to desperation, till she have emptied them in the bottomless sea of the blood of Christ Jesus: and the mercy of his Father, by this way of confession. But a house is not clean neither, though the dust be thrown out, if there hang cobwebs about the walls, in how dark corners soever. A conscience is not clean, though

the sins, brought to our memory by this examination, be cast upon God's mercy, and the merits of his Son, by confession, if there remain in me, but a cobweb, a little, but a sinful delight in the memory of those sins, which I had formerly committed. How many men sin over the sins of their youth again, in their age, by a sinful delight in remembering those sins, and a sinful desire, that their bodies were not past them! How many men sin over some sins, but imaginarily, (and yet damnably) a hundred times, which they never sinned actually at all, by filling their imaginations, with such thoughts as these! How would I be revenged of such an enemy, if I were in such a place of authority! How easily could I overthrow such a wasteful young man, and compass his land, if I had but money, to feed his humours! Those sins which we have never been able to do actually, to the harm of others, we do as hurtfully to our own souls, by a sinful desire of them, and a sinful delight in them. Therefore is there a cleansing required in this circumcision; such a cleansing as God promises, *I will cleanse their blood*[17], that is, the fountain, the work of all corrupt desires, and sinful delights. Now there is no cleansing of our blood, but by his blood; and the infusion, and application of his blood, is in the seal of the sacrament; so that that soul only is so cleansed, as is required in this spiritual circumcision, that preserves itself always, or returns speedily, to a disposition of a worthy receiving of that holy and blessed sacrament: he that is now in that disposition, as that, in a rectified conscience, he durst meet his Saviour at that table, and receive him there, (which cannot be done without contrition, and detestation of former sins) hath admitted this spiritual circumcision, so far, as is intended in the second signification of this word, which is, to cleanse.

But then there is a third action, which is, *succidere*, to cut up, to root out all, from whence this sin may grow up again, as the word is used in Job xviii., *His root shall be dried beneath, and all his branches shall be cut down.* In this circumcision, we must cut the root, the mother-sin, that nourishes all our sins, and the branches too, that if one sin have begot another, there be a fall of all our woods, of our timber-wood, (our grown and habitual

[17] Joel iii. 21.

sins) and of our under-woods, (those lesser sins which grow out of them). It is a cutting down, and a stubbing up, which is not done, till we have shaken off all, that we have gotten by those sins: it is not the circumcision of an excessive use of that sin, that will serve our turn, but such a circumcision, as amounts to an excision, a cutting off the root, and branch, the sin, and the fruits, the profits of that sin. I must not think to bribe God, by giving him some of the profit of my sin, to let me enjoy the rest: for, was God a venturer with me in my sin? Or did God set me to sea, that is, put me into this world, to see what I could get by usury, by oppression, by extortion, and then give him a part to charitable uses? As this word signifies *excedere*, to cut off all that is grown out of sin, so from this word *namal*, comes *nemala*, which is *formica*, *an ant*, which the Hebrews derive from this word, out of this reason, that as an ant doth gnaw all the corn it lays up, upon one side, so that it may never grow again, so this spiritual circumcision must provide, that that sin take no new root: but as long as thou makest profit, or takest pleasure in anything sinfully gotten, thy sin grows; so that this circumcision is not perfected but by restitution and satisfaction of all formerly damnified. These then be all the ways that are presented in these significations and use of this word, which the Holy Ghost hath chosen here, purging by consideration and confessing, cleansing by contrition and detesting, preventing of future growth by satisfaction in restoring. A little remains to be said (though it be also implied in that which hath been said) of the *ubi*, the place where this circumcision is to be applied. The Scripture speaks of uncircumcised hearts, and uncircumcised lips, and uncircumcised ears; and our eyes in looking, and coveting, and our hands in reaching to that which is not ours, are as far uncircumcised as ears, or lips, or hearts: therefore we are to carry this circumcision all over; We must circumcise, says St. Bernard, *in carne*, *peccatum*, the flesh, the body, the substance of the sin, *in cute*, *operimentum*, in the skin, all covers, and palliations, and disguises, and extenuations of the sin; and, *in sanguine incentivum*, in the blood all fomentations and provocations to that sin: the sin itself, the circumstances of the sin, the relapses to or towards that sin must be circumcised: *Judæus ut parvulus*,

congruum accepit mandatum, exiguæ circumcisionis, says the same father, The Jew was but in an infancy, in a minority, and God did not look for so strong a proceeding from the Jew, as from us, but led him by the arms, by the help of ceremonies and figures, and accordingly required but a circumcision in one part of the body: but God looks for more, at the hands of Christians, to whom he hath fully manifested and applied himself. As Christ said to the Jews, *Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, it is nothing:* so except our righteousness exceed them that exceeded the Scribes, it is nothing: and therefore, *Toto corpore baptizamur* (says Bernard) *quia totius hominis integra circumcisio;* To show, that it is the whole man that is to be circumcised; we are baptized, we are washed all over, (for so long, even to Bernard's time, it seems, that manner of baptizing, by immersion of the whole body, and not by aspersion upon the face only, continued in the general practice of the church). So that if it be not an entire circumcision of the whole man, that will fall upon us, which God threatens in the prophet, *I will visit all them which are circumcised, with them which are not circumcised*[18]; if we circumcise in part, leave some sins, and cleave to others, we shall be, in the sight of God, altogether uncircumcised; Adam was not the less naked in God's sight, for his fig-leaf; half-repentances are no repentances; either we are in a privation, or in a habit; covered over with righteousness, or naked.

When therefore the Lord and his Spirit calls thee to this spiritual circumcision, remember that Abraham did not say when he was called, Lord, I have followed thy voice, in leaving my country; Lord, I have built thee an altar, what needs more demonstration of my obedience? Say not thou, Lord, I have built an hospital; Lord, I have fed the poor at Christmas; Lord, I have made peace amongst thy people at home; I have endowed an alms'-house; but persevere in doing good still, for, God takes not the tree, where it grows, but where it falls; for the most part, the death of a man is such, as his life was; but certainly the life of a man, that is, his everlasting life, is such as his death is. Again, Abraham did not say of this, That it was a command-

[18] Jer. ix. 25.

ment in a slight, and frivolous, and uncivil matter; do not thou say, That it is an impertinent thing in this spiritual circumcision, to watch thy eating and drinking, and all such indifferent actions, and to see that all they be done to the glory of God; for, as the apostle says, *That the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man;* so we may piously say, That the levity of God is graver than the gravity of all the philosophers and doctors of the world; as we may see in all his ceremonial laws, where the matter seems very light in many places, but yet the signification very important; and therefore apply this circumcision, even in thy least, and most familiar action. So also Abraham was not diverted from obeying God, by the inconvenience of having all his family diseased at once; he did not say, I am content to circumcise my son, but would spare my servants yet, for necessary uses; do not thou say, thou art content to circumcise thine eldest son, to abate somewhat of that sin which thou begannest within thy youth, but wouldst fain spare some serviceable and profitable sins for a time, and circumcise them hereafter. To pursue this example, Abraham did not say, *Cras Domine*, Lord, I will do all this to-morrow; but, as the commandment was given in that phrase of expedition, *Circumcidendo circumcides*, *In circumcising thou shalt circumcise;* which denoted a diligent and a present despatch; so Abraham did despatch it diligently and presently that day. Do not thou say, *Cras Domine*, To-morrow, some other day, in the day of mine age, or of my death, or of affliction and tribulation; I will circumcise all, for age, and sickness, and tribulations, are circumcisions of themselves; a fever circumcises thee then, or an apoplexy, and not thy devotion; and incapacity of sinning is not sanctification: if any man put off his repentance till death, *Fateor non negamus quod petit*, says St. Augustine, I dare not deny that man, whatsoever God may be pleased to grant him; *Sed non presumimus, quod bene erit;* I dare not presume to say, that that man died well, *Non presumo, non vos fallo, non presumo*, says that father, with some vehemency, I dare not warrant him, let me not deceive you with saying that I dare, for I dare not: and, beloved, that is but a suspicious state in any man, in which another Christian hath just reason to doubt of his salvation, as St. Augustine doth shrewdly doubt of these late repenters, *Sicut*

ejus damnatio incerta, ita remissio dubia; As I am not sure he is damned, so I am not sure he is saved, no more sure of one than of the other. It is true, we have the example of the crucified thief, but it is but a hard case, when a thief must guide us and be our example; we suspect wills that are made of temporal goods in that state, at the last gasp, and shall we think a man to be *compos mentis*, of a perfect understanding for the bequeathing of his soul at his last gasp? *Non præsumo, non vos fallo, non præsumo*, I should deceive you, if I should say it, I dare not say it, says that father. Come therefore to this circumcision betimes, come to it, this day, come this minute: this day thy Saviour was circumcised in the flesh, for thee; this day circumcise thy heart to him, and all thy senses, and all thy affections. It is not an utter destroying of thy senses, and of thy affections, that is enjoined thee; but, as when a man had taken a beautiful woman captive in the wars, he was not bound to kill her, but he must shave her head, and pare her nails, and change her garments[19], before he might marry her; so captivate, subdue, change thy affections, and that is the destruction which makes up this circumcision: change thy choler into zeal, change thy amorousness into devotion, change thy wastefulness into alms to the poor, and then thou hast circumcised thy affections, and mayest retain them, and mayest confidently say with the apostle, *We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*[20]. Do this to-day; as God this day gives thee a new year, and hath not surprised thee, nor taken thee away in the sins of last year; as he gives thee a new year, do thou give him a new-year's gift, *cor novum*, a new and a circumcised heart, and *canticum novum*, a new song, a delight to magnify his name, and speak of his glory, and declare his wondrous works to the sons of men, and be assured that whether I, or any other of the same ministry, shall speak to you from this place, this day twelve-month, and shall ask your consciences then, Whether those things which you heard now, have brought you to this circumcision, and made you better this year than you were the last, and find you under the same uncircumcision still, be assured that God will not, God cannot be

[19] Deut. xxi. 12. [20] Phil. iii. 3.

mocked, but as he will receive us, with an *Euge bone serva, Well done my good and faithful servant;* so he will say to you, *Perditio tua ex te, Your destruction is from yourselves:* enough hath been done for you by me, enough hath been said to you by my servants, *Quare moriemini, Why will you die O house of Israel?* And after a long despising of his graces, he will come to a final separation; you shall come to say, *Nolumus hunc regnare,* We will not have Christ Jesus to reign over us; and Christ Jesus shall come to say, *Nescio vos,* I know you not, nor whence you are. *Hodie si vocem ejus,* if you will hear his voice this day, *Hodie eritis, This day you shall be with him in paradise,* and dwell in it all the year, and all the years of an everlasting life, and of infinite generations. Amen.

SERMON CXXXI.

PREACHED AT ST. DUNSTAN'S.

1 THESSALONIANS v. 16.

Rejoice evermore.

WE read in the natural story, of some floating islands, that swim and move from place to place; and in them a man may sow in one place, and reap in another: this case is so far ours, as that in another place we have sowed in tears, and by his promise, in whose tears we sowed them, when we handled those two words, *Jesus wept,* we shall reap in joy: that harvest is not yet; it is reserved to the last resurrection: but the corn is above ground, in the resurrection of our head, the first-fruits of the dead, Christ Jesus, and that being the first visible step of his exaltation, begins our exultation, who in him are to rejoice evermore. *The heart knoweth his own bitterness*[1]; he and none but he; others feel it not, retain it not, pity it not; and therefore says the text, *A stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy:* he shall have a joy which no stranger, not he himself whilst he was a stranger to God, and

[1] Prov. xiv. 10.

to himself, could conceive. If we ask, as Christ's disciples asked of him, *Quod signum*[1]? What shall be the sign of thy coming, of this joy in the midst of thy bitterness? *Ipsæ lachryma lætitiæ testes, et nuncii*[2]: The tears themselves shall be the sign, the tears shall be ambassadors of joy; a present gladness shall consecrate your sorrow, and tears shall baptize, and give a new name to your passion, for your wormwood shall be manna; even then when it is wormwood, it shall be manna, for, *Gaudebitis semper*, You shall rejoice evermore.

But our text does more than imply a promise to us, for it lays a precept upon us: it is not, *gaudebitis*, you shall rejoice, by way of comfort, but it is, *gaudete*, rejoice, see that you do rejoice, by way of commandment, and that shall be our first part. *Cadit sub præcepto;* it hath the nature of a commandment. Angels pass not from extreme to extreme, but by the way between; man passes not from the miseries of this life, to the joys of heaven, but by joy in this life too; for he that feels no joy here, shall find none hereafter. And when we pass from the substance of the precept, to the extent thereof (which will be our second part) from the first word, rejoice, to the other, rejoice always; we shall cleave that into two periods, *Gaudete in bonis*, Rejoice in your prosperity, and *Gaudete in malis*, Rejoice in your adversity too. But because it is *in sempiternum*, that must be *in sempiterno*, because it is always, it must be in him who is always, yesterday and to-day, and the same for ever, joy in God, joy in the Holy Ghost, which will be another branch in that second part; of which joy, though there be a preparatory, and inchoative participation and possession in this life, yet the consummation being reserved to our entrance into our master's joy, not only the joy which he gives, that is here, but the joy which he is, that is only there, we shall end in that, beyond which none can go, no not in his thoughts, in some dim contemplation, and in some faint representation of the joys of heaven, and in that contemplation we shall dismiss you.

First then it is presented in the nature of a commandment, and lays an obligation upon all, at all times to procure to ourselves, and to cherish in ourselves, this joy, this rejoicing. What is joy?

[1] Matt. xxiv. 3. [2] Augustine.

Comparatur ad desiderium sic ut quies admotum[4]; As rest is the end of motion, every thing moves therefore that it may rest, so joy is the end of our desires, whatsoever we place our desires, our affections upon, it is therefore, that we may enjoy it; and therefore, *Quod est in brutis in parte sensitiva delectatio, in hominibus in parte intellectiva est gaudium*[5]: Beasts and carnal men, who determine all their desires in the sensual parts, come no further than to delight: but men, who are truly men, and carry them to the intellectual part, they, and only they, come to joy. And therefore, says Solomon, *It is the joy of the just to do judgment;* to have lain still, and done no wrong occasions, is not this joy; joy is not such a rest, as the rest of the earth, that never moved; but as the *sun rejoiceth to run his race, and his circuit is unto the end of heaven;* so this joy is the rest and testimony of a good conscience, that we have done those things which belong to our calling, that we have moved in our sphere. For, if men of our profession, whose function it is, to attend the service of God, delight ourselves in having gathered much in this world; if a soldier shall have delighted himself, in giving rules of agriculture, or of architecture; if a counsellor of state, who should assist with his counsel upon present emergencies, delight himself in writing books of good counsel for posterity, all this occasions not this joy; because though there have been motion, and though there be rest, yet that is not rest after the motion proper to them. A man that hath been out of his way all the day, may be glad to find a good inn at night; but yet it is not properly joy, because he is never the nearer home. Joy is peace for having done that which we ought to have done: and therefore it is well expressed, *Optima conjectura an homo sit in gratia est gaudere*[6]; The best evidence that a man is at peace, and in favour with God, is, that he can rejoice. To try whether I be able by argument and disputation to prove all, that I believe, or to convince the adversary, this is *academia animæ*, the soul's university, where some are graduates, and all are not: to try whether I be able to endure martyrdom for my belief, this is *gehenna animæ*, the rack, the torture of the soul, and some are able to hold it out, and all are

[4] Aquin. xiiæ. 28. 3. [5] Banner. [6] Banner.

not: but to try whether I can rejoice in the peace, which I have with God, this is but *catechismus animæ*, the catechism of the soul, and every man may examine himself, and every man must; for it is a commandment, *Gaudete semper*, Rejoice evermore.

It is, we cannot say the office, but the essence of God to do good; and when he does that, he is said to rejoice: *The Lord thy God will make thee plenteous*[7]: (there is his goodness) and he will *rejoice again over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers*[8]. The Lord will love thee, there is his goodness; and rejoice in thee, and he will rest in his love. Such a joy as is a rest, a complacency in that good which he hath done, we see is placed in God himself. It is in angels too: their office is to minister to men, (for by nature they are spirits, but by office they are angels) and when they see so good effect of their service, as that a sinner is converted, *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God*[9]. Christ himself had a spiritual office and employment, *To give light to the blind, and to inflict blindness upon those who thought they saw all.* And when that was done, *Exultavit in spiritu*, in that hour Christ rejoiced in the spirit, and said, *I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth*[10], &c. To have something to do, to do it, and then to rejoice in having done it, to embrace a calling, to perform the duties of that calling, to joy and rest in the peaceful testimony of having done so; this is christianly done, Christ did it; angelically done, angels do it; godly done, God does it. *As the bridegroom rejoiceth in his bride, so doth thy God rejoice in thee*[11]. Example, as well as the rule, repeats it to you, *Gaudete semper.*

But how far may we carry this joy? To what outward declarations? To laughing? St. Basil makes a round answer to a short question. *An in universum ridere non licet*[12]? May a man laugh in no case? *Admodum perspicuum est*, It is very evident, that a man may not, because Christ says, *Væ vobis*, Woe be unto you that laugh; and yet St. Basil in another place[13] says (which we are rather to take in explanation, than in contradiction of himself) that that woe of Christ is cast, *in obstreperum sonum*,

[7] Deut. xxx. 9. [8] Zeph. iii. 17. [9] Luke xv. 10.
[10] Luke x. 21. [11] Isaiah lxii. 1. [12] Basil q. brevis xxxi.
[13] Homil. de gratiar. actione.

non in sinceram hilaritatem: upon a dissolute and indecent, and immoderate laughing, not upon true inward joy, howsoever outwardly expressed. At the promise of a son, *Abraham fell on his face and laughed*[14]; a religious man, and a grave man, one hundred years old, expressed this joy of his heart, by this outward declaration. Hierome's translation reads it, *Risit in corde*, he laughed within himself, because St. Hierome thought that was a weakness, a declination towards unbelief, to laugh at God's promise, as he thinks Abraham did. But St. Paul is a better witness in his behalf; *Against hope he believed in hope*[15]; he was not weak in faith; he staggered not at the promise of God, through unbelief. *Quod risit, non incredulitatis, sed exultationis indicium fuit*[16], His laughing was no ebb of faith, but a flood of joy. It is not as St. Hierome takes it, *Risit in corde putans celare deum, aperte, ridere non ausus;* He kept in his laughing, and durst not laugh out; but as St. Ambrose says well, *Risus non irrisio diffidentis, sed exultatio gratulantis;* He laughed not in a doubtful scorn of God's promise, but in an overflowing of his own joy: it is well expressed, and, well concluded, *O virum æterno risu vere dignum, et sempiternæ jucunditati bene præparatum*[17], This was good evidence, that he was a man well disposed for the joys of heaven; that he could conceive joy in the temporal blessings of God, and that he thought nothing misbecoming him, that was an outward declaration of this joy. It is a dangerous weakness, to forbear outward declarations of our sense of God's goodness, for fear of misinterpretations; to smother our present thankfulness, for fear that some should say it was a levity to thank God so soon, till God had done the whole work. For God does sometimes leave half his work undone, because he was not thanked for it. When David *danced and leaped, and shouted before the ark*[18]; if he laughed too, it misbecame him not. Not to feel joy is an argument against religious tenderness, not to show that joy, is an argument against thankfulness of the heart: that is a stupidity, this is a contempt. *A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance*[19]. If it be within, it will be without too.

[14] Gen. xvii. 17. [15] Rom. iv. 18. [16] Ambrose.
[17] Rupertus. [18] 2 Sam. vi. 15. [19] Prov. xv. 13.

Except I hear thee say, in thine actions, *Gaudeo*, I do rejoice, I cannot know that thou hast heard the apostle say, *Gaudete*.

Joy for God's blessings to us, joy for God's glory to himself, may come *ad risum*, and further: not only *ad ridendum*, but *ad irridendum*, not only to laugh in our own prosperity, but to laugh them to scorn that would have impeached it. They are put both together in God himself, *Ridebo*, and *irridebo*, *I will laugh at your calamities, and I will mock when your fear cometh*[20]. And this being in that place intended of God, is spoken in the person of Wisdom; it misbecomes not wisdom and gravity to laugh in God's deliverances, nor to laugh to scorn those that would have blown up God's servants, when it is carried so high as to *the kings of the earth, and the rulers that take counsel against the Lord, and against his Anointed*[21], we may come *ad gaudium*, to joy in God's goodness, but because their place, and persons are sacred, we leave the *ridere* and the *irridere* to God, who says, (ver. 4.) *That he will laugh at them, and hold them in derision.* But at lower instruments, lower persons may laugh, when they fill the world with the doctrine of killing of kings, and mean that that should animate men against such kings as they call heretics, and then find in experience that this hath wrought only to the killing of kings of their own religion, we lament justly the event, but yet we forbear our *ridere* and our *irridere*, at the crossing and the frustrating of their plots and practices. Pharaoh's army was drowned, *Et cecinit Moses*, Moses sung, Sisera was slain, *Et cecinit Deborah*, Deborah sung. Thus in the disappointing of God's enemies, God's servants come to outward manifest signs of joy. Not by a libellous and scurril profanation of persons that are sacred, but in fitting psalms and sermons, and prayers, and public writings to the occasion, to proceed to a *ridere* and *irridere*, and as St. Augustine reads that place of the Proverbs, *Superridere*, to laugh God's enemies into a confusion to see their plots so often, so often, so often frustrated. For so far extends *Gaudete*, *Rejoice evermore.*

Joy then, and cheerfulness, is *sub præcepto*, it hath the nature of a commandment, and so he departs from a commandment that departs, and abandons himself into an inordinate sadness. And

[20] Prov. i. 26. [21] Psalm ii. 2.

therefore David chides his soul, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me*[22]? And though he come after to dispute against this sadness of the soul, which he had let in, *Hope yet in God, and yet the Lord will command his loving kindness, and my prayer shall be unto the God of my life*, yet he could not put it off, but he imagines that he hears his enemies say, *Where is thy God?* and when he hath wrestled himself weary, he falls back again in the last verse, to his first faintness, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me?* For, *as he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart*[23]: That heaviness makes him incapable of natural, of moral, of civil, of spiritual comforts, charm the charmer never so wisely. Eli heard that the battle was lost, and that his sons were slain, and admitted so much sorrow for those, that when the last was added, *The ark was taken by the enemy*, he was too weak for that, and fell down, and brake his neck[24]. It was his daughter-in-law's case too; she overcharged her soul with sadness for her husband's death, and her father's death, and when the report of the ark came, she fell into labour and died; and though the women told her, *Fear not, thou hast borne a son, yet she answered not.* Though the ark of God, the worship of his name, be at any time transferred from where it was, despair not thou of God's reducing it; for this despairing of others, may bring thee to despair in some accident to thyself: accustom thyself to keep up the consideration of God's mercy at the highest, lodge not a sad suspicion in any public, in any private business, that God's powerful mercy can go but thus far: he that determineth God's power and his mercy, and saith, Here it must end, is as much an atheist, as he that denieth it altogether. The key of David openeth and no man shutteth; the spirit of comfort shineth upon us, and would not be blown out. Monastery, and hermitage, and anchorite, and such words of singularity are not synonyma with those plural words *Concio, cœtus, ecclesia, synagoga et congregatio*, in which words God delivereth himself to us. A church is a company, religion is religation, a binding of men together in one manner of worship; and worship is an exterior

[22] Psalm xlii. 5. [23] Prov. xxv. 20. [24] 1 Sam. iv. 18.

service; and that exterior service is the *Venite exultemus*, to come and rejoice in the presence of God.

If in any of these ways God cast a cloud upon our former joys, yet to receive good at God's hand, and not to receive evil; to rejoice in the calm, and not in the storm; this is to break at least half of the commandment, which is *gaudete semper*. And so from the first part, which is the substance which we have passed by these steps, that this rejoicing hath the nature of a commandment, it must be maintained, and that inward joy must be outwardly expressed, even to the disgrace and confusion of God's enemies, and to the upholding of a joyful constancy in ourselves: we pass now to the extent of the commandment, *gaudete semper*, evermore.

Did God mean that we should rejoice always; when he made six days for labour, and but one for rest? Certainly he did. Six days we are to labour, and to do all that we have to do: and part of that which we have to do, is to rejoice in our labour. Adam in the state of innocency had abundant occasion of continual rejoicing; but yet even in that joyful state he was to labour, *to dress and to keep the garden*[25]. After the fall, when God made the labour of man more heavy, *In sudore vultus, That he should not eat, but in the sweat of his brow*[26], yet God gave him not that penalty, that occasion of sadness till he had first imprinted the root of true joy, the promise of a Messias; that promise he made before he came to denounce the penalty, first came the *ipse conteret*, and then *in sudore vultus:* upon those words, *Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hand*[27], *Debuit dicere fructum, non laborem*, saith Augustine, David should have said, He shall eat the fruit, not the labour of his hands. *Sed ipse labores non sunt sine gaudio*, But the very labours, the very afflictions of good men, have joy in them. *Si labor potest manducari et jucundari, manducatus fructus laboris qualis erit?* And if labour itself, affliction itself, minister joy, what a manner, what a measure of joy is in the full possession thereof in heaven? And as the consideration of the words immediately after the text, hath made more than one of the fathers say, *Etiam somnia justorum preces sunt*, Even the

[25] Gen. ii. 15. [26] Gen. iii. 19. [27] Psalm cxxviii. 2.

sleep of the righteous is a service to God, and their very dreams are prayers and meditations, so much more properly, may we call the sleep, and the bodily rest, nay, the bodily torments of the righteous, joy, rejoicing. So that neither week-day, nor sabbath-day nor night, labour nor rest interrupteth this continual joy: we may, we must rejoice evermore.

Gaudete in bonis, rejoice when God giveth you the good things of this world; first, *in temporalibus*, when God giveth you the good temporal things of this world. *Gaudete in terra*, rejoice that God hath placed you in so fertile, in so fruitful a land. *Gaudete in pace*, rejoice that God hath afforded you peace to till the land. *Gaudete de temporibus*, rejoice that God giveth good seasons, that the earth may give her increase, and that man may joy in the increase of the earth: and *Gaudete de amicitiis*, rejoice that God giveth you friendship with such nations, as may take of your superfluities, and return things necessary to you. There is a joy required for temporal things; for he that is not joyful in a benefit, is not thankful. Next to that detestable assertion (as St. Augustine calleth it) That God made any man to damn him, it is the perversest assertion, That God gives man temporal things to ensnare him. Was that God's primary intention in prospering Noah's vineyard, that Noah should be drunken[28]? God forbid.

Doth God give any man honour or place, *Ut glorietur in malo, qui potens est*, that his power might be an occasion of mischief and oppression? God forbid. God made light at first; but we know not what that light was: but God gathered all light into the sun, and all the world sees it. God infuses grace and spiritual blessings into a man's heart, and no man sees that, but the spirit that is in that man; but the evidence, the great seal, that he pleads in the eye of the world, is God's temporal blessings. When Assuerus put the royal vesture and ring, and crown upon Mordecai, it was to show that he was in his favour; in the same intention proceeds God too, when he gives riches, or honour, or favour, or command; he would have that soul rejoice in these, as in testimonies of his favour. God loves *hilarem datorem*, a cheerful giver, but he that is not a cheerful receiver, is a worse natured man, and more dishonours, nay, reproaches his bene-

[28] Gen. ix. 12.

factor. They then disobey this commandment, of rejoicing in temporal things, that employ not their industry, that use not all good means to attain them. Every man is therefore planted in the world, that he may grow in the world; and as venomous herbs delight in the shade, so a sullen retiring argues a murmuring and venomous disposition; to contemn God's temporal blessings, or to neglect or undervalue those instruments, those persons, by whom God sheds such blessings upon us, is to break that branch of this commandment *Gaudete semper*, Rejoice evermore; for he does not rejoice in *bonis temporalibus*. So is it also, as not to seek them before, so not to use them when we have them. When in a fear of growing poor, makes us think God to be poor too, that if we spend this, God can give us no more, when for fear of lacking at our end, we lack all the way, when we abound and yet will pay no debts, not to our own bellies, our own backs, our own respect, and the decency that belongs to our rank, these men so sordid, so penurious, and suspicious of God's providence, break this branch of this commandment too, because they do not rejoice in *bonis temporalibus*. And as the not-seeker, and the not-user, so the abuser of these temporal blessings is in the same transgression. He that thinks all the world as one jewel, and himself the cabinet, that all was made for him, and he for none, forgets his own office, his stewardship, by which he is enabled and bound to the necessities of others: to collect, he that seeks not, he that denies all to himself, he that denies all but himself, break this branch, for they do not rejoice in *bonis temporalibus*.

This we must do; but in *bonis spiritualibus*, in the spiritual good things of this world, much more we call those the spiritual good things of this world, which advance our devotion here, and consequently our salvation hereafter. The ritual and ceremonial, the outward worship of God, the places, the times, the manner of meetings, which are in the disposition of Christian princes, and by their favours of those churches, which are in their government: and not to rejoice in the peaceful exercise of those spiritual helps, not to be glad of them, is a transgression. Now the prophet expresses this rejoicing thus, *Venite exultemus*, Let us come and rejoice. We must do both. And therefore they who out of

a thraldom to another church abstain from these places of these exercises, that do not come, or if they do come, do not rejoice, but though they be here brought by necessity of law, or of observation, yet had rather they were in another chapel, or that another kind of service than in this: and they also who abstain out of imaginary defects in this church, and think they cannot perform David's *De profundis*, they cannot call upon God out of the depth, except it be in a conventicle in a cellar, nor acknowledge Solomon's *Excelsis excelsior*[29], that God is higher than the highest, except it be in a conventicle in a garret, and when they are here wink at the ornaments, and stop their ears at the music of the church, in which manner she hath always expressed her rejoicing in those helps of devotion; or if there be a third sort who abstain, because they may not be here at so much ease, and so much liberty, as at their own houses, all these are under this transgression. Are they in the king's house at so much liberty as in their own? and is not this the King of kings' house? Or have they seen the king in his own house, use that liberty to cover himself in his ordinary manner of covering, at any part of divine service? Every preacher will look, and justly, to have the congregation uncovered at the reading of his text: and is not the reading of the lesson, at time of prayer, the same word of the same God, to be received with the same reverence? The service of God is one entire thing; and though we celebrate some parts with more, or with less reverence, some kneeling, some standing, yet if we afford it no reverence, we make that no part of God's service. And therefore I must humbly entreat them, who make this choir the place of their devotion, to testify their devotion by more outward reverence there; we know our parts in this place, and we do them; why any stranger should think himself more privileged in this part of God's house, than we, I know not. I presume no man will misinterpret this that I say here now; nor, if this may not prevail, misinterpret the service of our officers, if their continuing in that unreverent manner give our officers occasion to warn them of that personally in the place, whensoever they see them stray into that uncomely negligence. They should not blame me now, they must not blame them then, when they

[29] Eccles. v. 8.

call upon them for this reverence in this choir; neither truly can there be any greater injustice, than when they who will not do their duties, blame others for doing theirs.

But that we are bound to a thankful rejoicing in all that falls well to us, *in bonis*, admits less doubt, and therefore requires less proof: but the *semper* of out text extends farther, *gaudete in malis*, we do not rejoice always, except we rejoice in evil days, in all our crosses and calamities. Now, if we be not affected with God's judgments, if we conceive not a sorrow for them, or the cause of them, our sins, God is angry; will he be angry too, if we be not glad of them, if we do not rejoice in them? Can this sorrow and this joy consist together? Very well. The School in the mouth of Aquinas gives instances; If an innocent man be condemned, *Simul placet ejus justitia, et displicet afflictio*[30], I congratulate his innocency, and I condole his death both at once. So *displicet mihi quod peccavi, et placet quod displicet;* I am very sorry that I have sinned, but yet I am glad that I am sorry. So that, *ipsa tristitia materia gaudii;* some sorrow is so far from excluding joy, as that naturally it produces it. St. Augustine hath sealed it with this advice, *Semper doleat pœnitens*, Let him who hath sinned always lament; but then where is the *gaudete semper?* He tells us too, *Semper gaudeat de dolore*, Let him always rejoice, that God hath opened him a way to mercy, by sorrow. *Lacrymæ seminium quoddam sunt et fœnus, quibus increscit gaudium*[31]; Sorrow is our seminary, from whence we are transplanted into a larger orchard, into the dilatation of the heart, joy; Sorrow, says he, *seminium est, et fœnus est;* it is our interest, our use; and if we have sorrow upon sorrow, it is use upon use, it doubles the principal, which is joy, the sooner. *Chordæ cum distenduntur*, it is St. Augustine's musical comparison, when the strings of an instrument are set up, the musical sound is the clearer; if a man's sinew be stretched upon the rack, his joy is not the less perfect. Not that a man must seek out occasion of sorrow; provoke the magistrate by seditious intemperance, and call it zeal; or macerate the body with fastings, or mangle it with whippings, and call that merit; *Non ut quærant materiam quam non habent, sed ut inveniant eam quam nescientes habent*[32]; This is the way of

[30] Aquin. iii. 84. [31] Basil. [32] Augustine.

joy, not to seek occasions of sorrow, which they have not, but to find out those which they have, and know not; that is, their secret sins, the causes of God's judgments in themselves. To discern that that correction that is upon me, is from God, and not a natural accident, this is a beam of joy, for I see that he would cure me, though by corrosives. To discern that God is not unjust, nor cruel, and therefore it is something in me, and not in him, that brings it to this sharpness, this is a beam of joy too: for I see how to discharge God, and to glorify him, and how to accuse myself; and that is a good degree of repentance.

But to perfect my repentance, *Non sufficit dolore de peccatis, sed requiritur gaudium de dolore*, It is not enough to come to a sorrow in my sin, that may flow out into despair; but I must come to a joy in my sorrow, for that fixes me upon the application of Christ, and such a joy a man must suscitate and awaken in himself by these steps, *in malis temporalibus*, in all worldly crosses; else he does not *gaudere semper*.

No nor except he find this joy, *in malis spiritualibus*, in spiritual afflictions too. When I fall into new sorrow, after my former joy, relapse into those sins which I have repented (and beloved, the dangerous falling in any man, is to fall backward, he that falls forward, hath his eyes to help him, and his hands to help him, but he that falls backward lacks much) yet even out of these relapses we must find joy too. For when St. James says, *Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations*[33], as he speaks of all joy, so he intends, or may justly be extended to all temptations, not only temptations, that is, trials, when God proves a man by affliction, where moral constancy is exercised, but even in trial of religious constancy, in temptations to sin, still there is fresh occasion of joy in discerning God's deliverance from the falling into the sin, or from lying in the sin. *Ipsa tentatio, sal animæ*[34], as salt preserves flesh, so temptations preserve the soul: not the sinning, but the discerning that it is, nay that that was a temptation to sin, preserves the soul. And therefore he calls *tentationes custodes;* he makes even the evil angels, our guardians, our tutelar angels, because by their temptations they bring us up in the fear of God, and in the ways of joy. And therefore though it be a

[33] James i. 2. [34] Ambrose.

joyful thing to have overcome a temptation, yet determine not your joy in that; that if that temptation had overcome you, you might have no more joy, but (as Christ says) *In this rejoice not*, that is, not only in this, *that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven*[35]. Rejoice not in this, that is, determine not, conclude not your joy in this, that you have overcome that temptation, but rather in this; that God does not forsake you after a sin, nor after a relapse into sin; but manifests your election by continual returning to you: but that this may be the joy of the text, true joy, not a joy that induces presumption, for that will fail, that it may be *semper*, it must be *in sempiterno*, a joy rightly conceived, and rightly placed. *Gaudium in Domino:* and that is our next step.

Rejoice in the Lord always, says the apostle; and lest it should admit any interruption, he repeats it, *Iterum dico gaudete*, Again I say rejoice, but still in the Lord. For, *quasi locus quidam, justorum capax est Dominus*[36]: though God be in no place, God is the place, in whom all good men are. God is the court of every just king: God is the church of every holy priest: God is the field of every valiant man; and the bed of every sickly man: whatsoever is done *in Domino*, in the Lord, is done at home in the right place. He that is settled in God, centred in God, *Lætitiæ fontem, voluptatis radicem lucratus est*[37]. They are all considerable words; *lucratus est*, he hath purchased something which he did not inherit, he hath acquired something which was not his before, and what? *Fontem lætitiæ;* it is joy, else it were nothing: for what is wealth if sickness take away the joy of that? Or what is health, if imprisonment take away the joy of that? Or what is liberty, if poverty take away the joy of that? But he hath joy, and not a cistern but a fountain, the fountain of joy, that rejoices in God: he carries it higher in the other metaphor; he hath *radicem voluptatis;* a man may have *flores*, flowers of joy, and have no fruit, a man may have some fruit, and not enough, but if he have joy in God, he hath *radicem voluptatis*, if we may dare to translate it so, (and in a spiritual sense we may) it is a voluptuous thing to rejoice in God. In rejoicing in another

[35] Luke x. 20. [36] Basil. [37] Chrysostom.

thing St. Bernard's harmonious charm will strike upon us, *rara hora, brevis mora*, they are joys that come seldom, and stay but a little while when they come. Call it joy, to have had that thou lovest, in thine eye, or in thine arms, remember what oaths, what false oaths, it did cost thee before it came to that! And where is that joy now, is there a *semper* in that? Call it joy to have had him whom thou hatest, in thine hands or under thy feet, what ignoble disguises to that man, what servile observations of some greater, than either you, or he, did that cost you before you brought him into your power? and where is that joy, if a funeral or a bloody conscience benight it? *Currus Domini*, says David, *The chariots of the Lord are twenty thousand, thousands of angels*[38], says our translation; *Millia lætantium*, says the Vulgate; Thousands of them that rejoice. How comes it to be all thing angels and rejoicers? *Ne miremur illos lætari continuo subjecit, Dominus in illis*, St. Augustine saith, to take away all wonder, it is added, The Lord is in the midst of them, and then, be what they will, they must rejoice: for if he be with them they are with him, and he is joy. The name of Isaac signifies joy; and the trial of Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac: *Immola Isaac tuum*, sacrifice all thy joy in this world, to God, *et non mactatus sed sanctificatus Isaac tuus*[39], thy joy shall not be destroyed, but sanctified, so far from being made none, that it shall be made better, better here, but not better than that hereafter; which is our last step, beyond which there is nothing, that even true joy, rightly placed, is but an inchoative, a preparatory joy in this world. The consummation is for the next; *gaudebimus semper*.

Sicut lætantium omnium habitatio est in te, as St. Hierome reads those words[40], speaking of the Christian church here, It is the house of all them, who do as it were rejoice; who come nearest to true joy. And so, when the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, *Facti sumus sicut consolati*[41], We were as it were comforted. *Quare sicut*, says that father, Why is it so modified with that diminution, as it were? *Quia hic etiam in sanctis non perfecta consolatio;* Because, says he, in this world, even the

[38] Psalm LXVIII. 17. [39] Bernard.
[40] Psalm LXXXVII. 7. [41] Psalm CXXVI.

saints themselves have no perfect joy. Where the apostle compares the sorrow and the joy of this world, then the *quasi* lies upon the sorrow's side; it is but a half sorrow; *Quasi tristes, We are as it were sorrowful, but indeed rejoicing*[42]; but compare the best joy of this world, with the next, and the *quasi* will fall upon the joy of the world. For though we be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise[43], which is the earnest of our inheritance, (and this is the tropic of joy, the farthest that spiritual joy goes, in this zodiac, in this world) yet this carries us no farther, but *Ut ex arrabone æstimetur hæreditas*[44]; That by the proportion of the earnest, we might value the whole bargain: for what a bargain would we presume that man to have, that would give twenty thousand pounds for earnest? What is the joy of heaven hereafter, if the earnest of it here, be the seal of the Holy Ghost? God proceeds with us, as we do with other men. *Operariis in sæculo, cibus in opere, merces in fine datur*[45]: In this world, we give labourers meat and drink by the way, but wages at the end of their work. God affords us refreshing here, but joy hereafter. The best seal is the Holy Ghost, and the best matter that the Holy Ghost seals in, is in blood; in the dignity of martyrdom; and even for that, for martyrdom, we have a rule in the apostle, *Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings*[46]; that as he suffered for you, so you suffer for him: but in what contemplation? That when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be made glad with exceeding joy; not with exceeding joy, till then; for till then, the joys of heaven may be exceeded in the addition of the body. There is the rule, and the example is Christ himself, *Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross;* in contemplation of the *propterea exaltatus*, that therefore he should be exalted above all in heaven. *Rejoice and be glad;* why? *for great is your reward:* but where? *in heaven*[47]. And therefore *Ask and you shall receive; pray and you shall have answer:* But what answer? *That your joy shall be full*[48]. It shall be; in heaven. For *Quis sic delectat quam ille, qui fecit omnia quæ delectant*[49]? In whom can we fully rejoice,

[42] 2 Cor. vi. 10. [43] Eph. i. 14. [44] Hierome.
[45] Bernard. [46] 1 Pet. iv. 13.
[47] Matt. v. 12. [48] John xvi. 24. [49] Augustine.

but him, who made all things in which we rejoice by the way, *In thy name shall we rejoice all the day*[50], says David; *Si in nomine suo, non tota die.* St. Augustine says not that to any particular person, nor any particular calling, but to any man, to every man; any prince, any councillor, any prelate, any general, any discoverer, any that goes in any way of joy, and glory, *Si nomine suo, non tota die*, If they rejoice in their own names, their own wisdom, their own strength, they shall not rejoice all the day, but they shall be benighted with dark sadness, before their days end; *And their sun shall set at noon too*, as the prophet Amos speaks. And therefore that shall be Christ's expressing of that joy, at the last day, enter into thy master's joy, and leave the joy of servants (though of good servants) behind thee; for thou shalt have a better joy than that, thy master's joy.

It is time to end; but as long as the glass hath a gasp, as long as I have one, I would breathe in this air, in this perfume, in this breath of heaven, the contemplation of this joy. *Blessed is that man, Qui scit jubilationem*, says David, *that knows the joyful sound*[51]: for, *Nullo modo beatus, nisi scias unde gaudeas*[52]; For though we be bound to rejoice always, it is not a blessed joy, if we do not know upon what it be grounded: or if it be not upon everlasting blessedness. *Comedite amici*, says Christ, *bibite et inebriamini*[53]. *Eat and drink, and be filled.* Joy in this life, *ubi in sudore vescimur*, where grief is mingled with joy, is called meat, says St. Bernard, and Christ calls his friends to eat in the first word. *Potus in futuro*, says he, Joy in the next life, where it passes down without any difficulty, without any opposition, is called drink; and Christ calls his friends to drink; but the overflowing, the *ebrietas animæ*, that is reserved to the last time, when our bodies as well as our souls, shall enter into the participation of it: where, when we shall love every one, as well as ourselves, and so have that joy of our own salvation multiplied by that number, we shall have that joy so many times over, as there shall be souls saved, because we love them as ourselves, how infinitely shall this joy be enlarged in loving God, so far above ourselves, and all them. We have but this to add.

[50] Psalm LXXXIX. 16. [51] Psalm LXXXIX. 15.
[52] Augustine. [53] Cant. v. 1.

Heaven is called by many precious names; life[54], simply and absolutely there is no life but that. And kingdom[55]; simply, absolutely there is no kingdom, that is not subordinate to that. And *Sabbatum ex sabbato*[56], A sabbath flowing into a sabbath, a perpetual sabbath: but the name that should enamour us most, is that, that it is *satietas gaudiorum;* fulness of joy[57]. Fulness that needeth no addition; fulness, that admitteth no leak. And then though in the school we place blessedness, *in visione*, in the sight of God, yet the first thing that this sight of God shall produce in us (for that shall produce the reformation of the image of God, in us, and it shall produce our glorifying of God) but the first thing that the seeing of God shall produce in us, is joy. The measure of our seeing of God is the measure of joy. See him here in his blessings, and you shall joy in those blessings here; and when you come to see him *sicuti est*, in his essence, then you shall have this joy in essence, and in fulness; of which, God of his goodness give us such an earnest here, as may bind to us that inheritance hereafter, which his Son our Saviour Christ Jesus hath purchased for us, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. Amen.

SERMON CXXXII.

A LENT SERMON PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, FEBRUARY 20. 1617.

LUKE xxiii. 40.

Fearest not thou God, being under the same condemnation?

THE text itself is a christening sermon, and a funeral sermon, and a sermon at a consecration, and a sermon at the canonization of himself that makes it. This thief whose words they are, is baptized in his blood; there is his christening: he dies in that

[54] Matt. ix. 15.
[55] Luke xii. 32.
[56] Isaiah LXVI. 23.
[57] Psalm xvi. 11.

profession; there is his funeral: his diocese is his cross, and he takes care of his soul, who is crucified with him, and to him he is a bishop; there is his consecration: and he is translated to heaven; there is his canonization. We have sometimes mention in Moses' Book of Exodus, according to the Roman translation, *operis plumarii*, of a kind of subtle and various workmanship, employed upon the tabernacle, for which it is hard to find a proper word now; we translate it sometimes embroidery, sometimes needle-work, sometimes otherwise. It is evident enough, that it was *opus variegatum*, a work compact of divers pieces, curiously inlaid, and varied for the making up of some figure, some representation: and likeliest to be that which in sumptuous buildings, we use to call now Mosaic work: for that very word originally signifies, to vary, to mingle, to diversify. As the tabernacle of God was, so the Scriptures of God are of this Mosaic work: the body of the Scriptures hath in it limbs taken from other bodies; and in the word of God, are the words of other men, other authors, inlaid and inserted. But, this work is only where the Holy Ghost is the workman: it is not for man to insert, to inlay other words into the Word of God. It is a gross piece of Mosaic work, to insert whole apocryphal books into the Scriptures. It is a sacrilegious defacing of this Mosaic work, to take out of Moses' tables, such a stone as the second commandment; and to take out of the Lord's prayer, such a stone as is the foundation-stone, the reason of the prayer, *Quia tuum, For thine is the kingdom*, &c. It is a counterfeit piece of Mosaic work, when having made up a body of their canon-law, of the rags and fragments torn from the body of the fathers, they attribute to every particular sentence in that book, not that authority which that sentence had in that father from whom it is taken, but that authority which the canonization (as they call it) of that sentence gives it; by which canonization, and placing it in that book, it is made equal to the Word of God. It is a strange piece of Mosaic work, when one of their greatest authors pretending to present a body of proofs, for all controverted points from the Scriptures, and councils, and fathers (for he makes no mention in his promise of the mothers of the church) doth yet fill up that body with sentences from women, and obtrude to us

the revelations of Brigid, and of Catherine, and such she-fathers as those. But when the Holy Ghost is the workman, in the true Scriptures, we have a glorious sight of this Mosaic, this various, this mingled work; where the words of the serpent in seducing our first parents, the words of Balaam's ass in instructing the rider himself, the words of profane poets, in the writings and use of the apostle, the words of Caiaphas prophesying that it was expedient that one should die for all, the words of the devil himself (*Jesus I know, and Paul I know*) and here in this text, the words of a thief executed for the breach of the law; do all concur to the making up of the Scriptures, of the Word of God.

Now, though these words were not spoken at this time, when we do but begin to celebrate by a poor and weak imitation, the fasting of our Saviour Jesus Christ, but were spoken at the day of the crucifying of the Lord of life and glory; yet as I would be loth to think, that you never fast but in Lent, so I would be loth to think that you never fulfil the sufferings of Christ Jesus in your flesh, but upon Good-Friday, never meditate upon the passion, but upon that day. As the church celebrates an advent, a preparation to the incarnation of Christ, to his coming in the flesh, in humiliation: so may this humiliation of ours in the text, be an advent, a preparation to his resurrection, and coming in glory: and, as the whole life of Christ was a passion, so should the whole life (especially the humiliation) of a Christian, be a continual meditation upon that. Christ began with some drops of blood in his infancy, in his circumcision; though he drowned the sins of all mankind, in those several channels of blood, which the whips, and nails, and spear, cut out of his body in the day of his passion. So though the effects of his passion be to be presented more fully to you, at the day of his passion, yet it is not unseasonable now, to contemplate thus far the working of it upon this condemned wretch, whose words this text is, as to consider in them, first, the infallibility, and the dispatch of the grace of God upon them, whom his gracious purpose hath ordained to salvation: how powerfully he works; how instantly they obey. This condemned person who had been a thief, execrable amongst men, and a blasphemer, execrating God, was suddenly a convertite, suddenly a confessor, suddenly a martyr,

suddenly a doctor to preach to others. In a second consideration, we shall see what doctrine he preaches; not curiosities, not unrevealed mysteries, not matter of state, nor of wit, nor of carnal delight, but only the fear of God: *Nonne times Deum?* and for a third part, we shall see his auditory, the church that he preached to: he contented himself with a small parish; he had most care of their souls, that needed him most: he applies himself to the conversion of his fellow-thief. He works upon those sins which he knew to have been in himself. And he works upon him by all these steps: first, *nonne tu?* howsoever the rest do revile Christ, because they stay behind, and look for a temporal Messias, to make this life sweet, and glorious unto them; yet what is that to thee? thou art to have no part in it; howsoever they be, art not thou affected? *Nonne tu times?* If the bitterness of thy torment cannot let thee love, though thy stomach will not come down to kiss the rod and embrace correction, yet *nonne tu times?* doth it not imprint a fear in thee? *nonne times Deum?* Though the law have done the worst upon thee, witnesses, advocates, judges, executioners can put thee in no more fear; yet, *nonne times Deum?* fearest not thou God? who hath another tribunal, another execution for thee; especially when thou knowest thy condemnation, and such a condemnation; *eandem*, the same condemnation; and that this condemnation is not imminent, but now upon thee: when thou art now under the same condemnation, fearest thou not God?

The first thing then is, the powerfulness and the dispatch of the grace of God in the conversion of them, who are ordained unto it. In Judas, the devil entered into him when Christ gave him the sop; but the devil had put the treason in his heart before. The temptation had an inchoation, and it had a meditation, and it had a consummation. In St. Paul, in his conversion, God wrought upon him all at once, without any discontinuance; he took him at as much disadvantage for grace to work upon as could be; breathing threatenings and slaughters against the disciples, and provided with commissions for that persecution. But suddenly there came a light, and suddenly a stroke that humbled him, and suddenly a voice, and suddenly a hand that led him to Damascus. After God had laid hold upon him,

he never gave him over, till he had accomplished his purpose in him.

Whether this grace, which God presents so, be irresistible or no, whether man be not perverse enough to resist this grace, why should any perverse or ungracious man dispute? Hath any man felt a temptation so strong upon himself, but that he could have given another man reason enough to have kept him from yielding to that temptation? Hath any man felt the grace of God work so upon him at any time, as that he hath concurred fully, entirely with that grace, without any resistance, any slackness? New fashions in men, make us doubt new manners; and new terms in divinity were ever suspicious in the church of God, that new doctrines were hid under them. Resistibility, and irresistibility of grace, which is every artificer's wearing now, was a stuff that our fathers wore not, a language that pure antiquity spake not. They knew God's ordinary proceeding, they knew his common law, and they knew his chancery. They knew his chief justice Moses, that denounced his judgments upon transgressors of the law; and they knew his chancellor Christ Jesus, into whose hands he had put all judgments, to mitigate the rigour and condemnation of the law. They knew God's law, and his chancery: but for God's prerogative, what he could do of his absolute power, they knew God's pleasure, *nolumus disputari:* it should scarce be disputed of in schools, much less served in every popular pulpit to curious and itching ears; least of all made table-talk, and household discourse. Christ promises to come to the door, and to knock at the door, and to stand at the door, and to enter if any man open[1]; but he does not say, he will break open the door: it was not his pleasure to express such an earnestness, such an irresistibility in his grace, so. Let us cheerfully rely upon that; his purpose shall not be frustrated; his ends shall not be prevented; his ways shall not be precluded: but the depth of the goodness of God, how much good God can do for man; yea the depth of the illness of man, how much ill man can do against God, are such seas, as, if it be not impossible, at least it is impertinent, to go about to sound them.

Now, what God hath done, and will do for the most heinous

[1] Revel. iii.

offenders, we consider in this man: first, as he was execrable to men, a thief; and then, as he execrated God, a blasphemer. Now this thief is ordinarily taken, and so, in all probability, likely to have been a bloody thief, a murderer: for, for theft only, their laws did not provide so severe an execution as hanging upon the cross. We find that Judas, who was a thief, made it a law upon himself, by executing himself, to hang a thief; but it was not the ordinary justice of that country. First, then, he had been an enemy to the well-being of mankind, by injuring the possession, and the propriety, which men have justly in their goods, as he was a thief; and he had been an enemy to the very being of mankind, if he were a murderer.

And certainly, the sin of theft alone would be an execrable, a detestable sin to us all, but that it is true of us all, *Si videbas furem, currebas cum eo*[3]: We see that all men are thieves in their kinds, in their courses; but yet we know, that we ourselves are so too. We may have heard of princes that have put down stews, and executed severe laws against licentiousness; but that may have been to bring all the licentiousness of the city into the court. We may have heard sermons against usury; and this may have been, that they themselves might put out their money the better. We may cry out against theft, that we may steal the safelier. For we steal our preferment, if we bring no labour, nor learning to the service; and we steal our learning, if we forsake the fountains, and the fathers, and the schools, and deal upon rhapsoders, and common-placers, and method-mongers. Let him that is without sin, cast the first stone; let him that hath stolen nothing, apprehend the thief: rather, let him that hath done nothing but steal, apprehend the thief, and present himself there, where this thief found mercy, at the cross of Christ. Every man hath a sop in his mouth; his own robberies will not let him complain of the theft of excessive fees in all professions; of the theft of preventing other men's merit with their money; (which is a robbing of others, and themselves too;) of the theft of stealing affections, by unchaste solicitations; or of the great theft of stealing of hearts from princes, and souls from God, by insinuations of treason, and superstition, in a corrupt religion in every

[3] Psalm L.

corner. No man dares complain of other's thefts, because every man is *felo de se;* not only that himself hath stolen, but that he hath stolen away himself. Yea, he is *homicida sui*, a murderer of himself. *Omnis peccator homicida*[3], Every sinner is a murderer. *Quæris quem occiderit?* Doth he plead not guilty, or doth he put me to prove whom he hath murdered? *Si quid ad elogii ambitionem faciat, non inimicum, non extraneum, sed seipsum.* If he think it an honour to him, let him know, it is not an enemy, it is not a stranger, that he hath murdered, but himself, and his own soul. And such a thief, such a murderer was this; but not only such, but a public malefactor too; and so execrable to men: which is his first indisposition.

He had also execrated God; he had reviled Christ. This evangelist St. Luke does not say so, that both the thieves reviled Christ: but that acquits not this thief, that St. Luke does not say it, no more than it acquits them both, that St. John does not say, that either of them reviled Christ. And then both the other evangelists, St. Matthew and St. Mark, charge them both with it. *The same* (that is, those reviling words which others had used) *the thieves that were crucified cast in his teeth*[4]. And, *they also that were crucified with him, reviled him*[5]. Athanasius in his sermon *Contra omnes hæreses*, makes no doubt of it: *Duo latrones; altero execrante, altero dicente, quid execramur?* One thief said to the other, Why do we revile Christ? so that *de facto*, he imputes it to them both; both did it. Origen says, *Conveniens est, imprimis ambos blasphemasse;* not only that that is the most convenient exposition, but that it was the most convenient way to God, for expressing mercy, and justice too, that both should have reviled him. Origen admits a conveniency in it. Chrysostom implies a necessity, *Ne quis compositorem factam putaret:* lest the world should think it a plot, and that this thief had been well disposed and affected towards Christ before, therefore, says he, first he declares himself to be his enemy, in reviling him, and then was suddenly reconciled unto him. Hilary raises and builds a great point of divinity upon it; that since both the thieves, of which one was elect to salvation,

[3] Tertullian. [4] Matt. xxvii. 43. [5] Mark xv. 32.

did upbraid Christ with the ignominy of the cross, *Universis etiam fidelibus scandalum crucis futurum ostendit:* This shows, says he, that even the faithful and elect servants of God, may be shaken and scandalized, and fall away for a time, in the time of persecution. He raises positive and literal doctrine. And Theophylact raises mystical and figurative doctrine out of it; *Duo latrones figura Gentilium et Judæorum:* both Jews and Gentiles did reproach Christ, *Sicut et primo ambo latrones improperabant*, as at first both the thieves that were crucified did. St. Hierome inclines to admit a figure in St. Matthew's words: and he saith, that St. Matthew imputes that to both, which was spoken by one: but St. Hierome had no use of a figure here; for himself says, that Matthew which imputes this to both; and Luke, which imputes it to one, differ not: For, saith he, both reviled Christ at first; and then, one, *Vicis miraculis credidit*, upon the evidence of Christ's miracles, changed his mind, and believed in him. Only St. Augustine is confident in it, that this thief never reviled Christ; but thinks, that that phrase of Matthew, and of Mark, who impute it to both, is no more, but as if one should say, *Rusticani insultant;* Mean men, base men, do triumph over me: which, says he, might be said, if any one such person did so. Now, this might be true, if it had been said, thieves and malefactors reviled Christ: but, when it is expressly said, The thieves that were crucified, I take it to be a way of deriving the greater comfort upon us, and the greater glory upon Christ, and the greater assurance upon the prisoner, to leave him to the mercy of God, rather than to the wit of man; and rather to suffer Christ Jesus to pardon him, being guilty, than to dispute for his innocence. For, perchance, we shall lack an example of a notorious blasphemer, and reviler of Christ, to be effectually converted to salvation (of which example, considering how our times abound and overflow with this sin, we stand much in need) except this thief be our example; that though he were execrable to men, and execrated God, yet Christ Jesus took him into those bowels which he had ripped up, and into those wounds which he had opened wider by his execrations, and had mercy upon him, and buried him in them. And this was his second indisposition.

Now, for the speed and powerful working of this grace, to his

conversion; we must not insist long upon it, lest we be longer in expressing it, than it was in doing. We have no impression, no direction of the time, when his conversion was wrought. None of the evangelists mention when nor how it was done: none, but this evangelist, that it was done at all. But he mentions it in the clearest and safest demonstration of all; that is, in the effects of his conversion, his desire to convert others. And therefore we may discern, *Impetum gratiæ, in impetu pœnitentis:* the force, the vehemence of God's grace, in the vehemence of his zeal. Christ himself was silent, when this thief reviled him: and yet this thief comes presently to a zealous impatience, he cannot hear his companion revile. Christ had estated his apostles in heaven; he had given them reversions of judiciary places in heaven, twelve seats, to judge the twelve tribes: and yet *Facit fides innocentes latrones, facit perfidia apostolos criminosos*[6]: he infuses so much faith into this thief, as justifies him; and leaves his apostles so far to their infirmity as endangers them. To the chief of these apostles (in some services) to Peter himself, he says, *Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now*[7]; and to this thief he says, *Hodie mecum eris, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* So soon did he bring this thief, *Cui damnari ad tempus expedivit*[8], that had a good bargain of death, that escaped by being condemned, and was the better, and longer lived for being hanged; (for he was thereby, *collega martyrii*, and *particeps regni*[9], partaker of Christ's martyrdom, and partner of his kingdom; he brought him so soon to that height of faith, that even in that low state upon the cross, he prayed for a spiritual kingdom: whereas the apostles themselves, in that exaltation, when Christ was ascending, talked to him of a temporal kingdom. He came to know those wounds which were in Christ's body, *Non esse Christi, sed latronis, et amare cœpit*[10]; then he began to love him perfectly, when he found his own wounds in the body of his Saviour. So he came to declare perfect faith, in professing Christ's innocence[11], *This man hath done nothing;* and perfect hope, in the *Memento mei, Remember me in thy kingdom;* and perfect charity, in this increpation and rebuking of his companion. He was, as St. Augustine

[6] Ambrose. [7] John xiii. 36. [8] Ambrose.
[9] Cyprian. [10] Ambrose. [11] Gregory.

says, *Latro laudabilis et mirabilis;* Such a thief as deserved praise, and afforded wonder: but the best is the last, that he was *imitabilis;* that he hath done nothing, but that we may do so too, if we will apprehend that grace that he did. *Assumamus vocem latronis, si non volumus esse latrones:* If we will not steal ourselves out of the number, to whom God offers his saving grace. *Ut sedeamus a dextris, pendeamus a dextris;* Let us be content to suffer, but to suffer in the right. Suffering as malefactors, is somewhat too much on the left hand; though even that suffering do bring many to the right hand too. But suffering for schism in the pretence of zeal, suffering for treason in pretence of religion; this is both to turn out of this world on the left hand, and to remain on that hand for ever after in the world to come. This thief hung on the right hand, and was suddenly made a confessor for himself, a martyr to witness for Christ, a doctor to preach to his fellow. If the favour of a prince can make a man a doctor, *per saltum*, much more the mercy of Christ Jesus, which gives the sufficiency as well as the title: as he did in this thief, this new doctor, whose doctrine itself is our next consideration.

This doctrine was the fear of God, which was a pregnant and a plentiful commonplace for him to preach upon. And upon such an occasion, and such abundance of matter, we have here one example of an extemporal sermon; this thief had premeditated nothing. But he is no more a precedent for extemporal preaching, than he is for stealing. He was a thief before, and he was an extemporal preacher at last: but he teaches nobody else to be either. It is true, that if we consider the sermons of the ancient fathers, we shall find some impressions, some examples of sudden and unpremeditated sermons. St. Augustine sometimes[12] eases himself upon so long texts, as needed no great preparation, no great study; for a mere paraphrase upon this text, was enough for all his hour, when he took both Epistle and Gospel, and Psalm of the day for his text. We may see often in St. Bernard[13] (*Heri diximus*, and *Hesterno die fecimus mentionem*) that he preached divers days together. In the second of those sermons of St. Basil, which were upon the beginning of Genesis, it seems

[12] Ser. x. de verbis Hpli. [13] Ser. de Sancto Latrone, &c.

that Basil preached twice in a day; and in his sermon *De Baptismo*, it seems that he trusted upon the Holy Ghost, and his present inspiration: *Loquemur prout sermo nobis dabitur in apertione oris:* I intend to speak so, as the Holy Ghost shall give me utterance for the present. But as St. Augustine says in another case, *Da mihi Paulum;* so *Di mihi Basilios*, and *Augustinos;* bring such preachers as Basil and Augustine were, and let them preach as often as they will; and let every man whose calling it is, preach as often as he can; but let him not think that he can preach as often as he can speak. An inordinate opinion of purity, brought some men to keep two sabbaths a week, and others two Lents every year; and an opinion of a necessity of two sermons every sabbath, and two hours every sermon, may bring them to an opinion, that the sanctifying of the sabbath consists in the patience of hearing.

Here was an extemporal sermon, but a short one: he preaches nothing but the fear of God. It is not *de arcanis imperii*, matter of state: nor *de arcanis Dei*, of the unrevealed decrees of God. The thief does not say to Christ, *Perage quod decreveris;* Thou hast decreed my conversion, and therefore that decree must be executed, that must necessarily be performed, which thou hadst determined in thy kingdom before thou camest from thence; but he says, *Memento mei, cum veneris;* Take such a care of me, for my salvation, and preservation, and perseverance, as that I may follow thee into that kingdom, into which thou art now going; for our salvation is opened to us in that way, which Christ hath opened by his death: and without him, we understand no assurance of election; without his second going into his kingdom, we know nothing of that which he did, before he came from thence. This is then the fear of God, which those royal doctors of the Old Testament, David and Solomon, both preached[14], and which this primitive doctor of the Primitive church, this new convertite preached too, that no man may be so secure in his election, as to forbear to work out his salvation with fear and trembling: for God saves no man against his will, nor any man that thinks himself beholden for nothing, after the first decree. There is a name of force, of violence, of necessity

[14] Psalm xix. 9. Prov. i. 7.

attributed to a god, which is *Mauzzim*[15]: but it is the name of an idol, not of a true God. The name of the true God is *Dominus tzebaoth*, the *Lord of hosts;* a name of power, but not of force. There is a fear belongs to him; his purposes shall certainly be executed, but regularly and orderly; he will be feared, not because he forces us, imprints a necessity, a coaction upon us; but because, if we be not led by his orderly proceeding, there he hath power to cast body and soul into hell fire; therefore he will be feared, not as a wilful tyrant, but as a just judge; not as *Mauzzim*, the god of violence, but as *Dominus tzebaoth*, the Lord of hosts.

This then is his doctrine; and what is his auditory? He is not reserved for courts, nor for populous cities; it is but a poor parish that he hath; and yet he thinks of no change, but means to die there: and there he visits the poorest, the sickest, the wretchedest person, the thief. He had seen divers other of divers sorts, revile Christ as deeply as this thief: *They that passed by reviled him*[16]: *Prætereuntes*, They that did not so much as consider him, reviled him. They that know not Christ, yet will blaspheme him: if we ask them when, and where, and how, and why Christ Jesus was born, and lived, and died, they cannot tell it in their creed; and yet they can tell it in their oaths: they know nothing of his miraculous life, of his humble death, of his bitter passion, of the ransom of his blood, of the sanctuary of his wounds; and yet his life and death, and passion, and blood, and wounds, is oftener in their mouths in execrations, than in the mouth of the most religious man in his prayers. They revile Christ *prætereuntes*, as they pass along: not only as Origen says here, *Non incedentes recte, blasphemant*, They did not go perversely, crookedly, wilfully, and so blaspheme: nor as Hierome, *Non ambulantes in vero itinere Scripturarum, blasphemant;* They did not misinterpret places of Scripture, to maintain their errors, and so blaspheme; but they blasphemed *prætereuntes*, out of negligent custom and habit; they blaspheme Christ, and never think of it; that they may be damned *obiter*, by the way, collaterally, occasionately damned.

But it was not only they, *prætereuntes*, but the people that

[15] Dan. xi. 38. [16] Matt. xxvii. 39.

stood, and beheld, reviled Christ too[17]: men that do understand Christ, even then when they dishonour him, do dishonour him to accompany some greater persons upon whom they depend, in their errors. The priests, who should have called the passengers, with that, *Have ye no regard, all ye that pass by the way*[18]? the Scribes, who should have applied the ancient prophecies to the present accomplishment of them in the death of Christ: the Pharisees, who should have supplied their imperfect fulfilling of the law, in that full satisfaction, the death of Christ: the elders, the rulers, the soldiers, are all noted to have reviled Christ: they all concur to the performance of that prophecy in the person of Christ; and yet they will not see that the prophecy is performed in him: *All they that see me have me in derision*[19]: *They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they add unto the sorrows of him whom thou hast wounded*[20]: *Our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted in thee, and were delivered*[21]; *But I am a worm and no man, a shame to men, and the contempt of the people.* Pilate had lost his plot upon the people, to mollify them towards Christ; he brought him out to them, *flagellatum et illusum*, scourged and scorned[22], thinking that that would have reduced them. But this preacher leaves all the rest, either to their farther obduration, or their fitter time of repentance, if God had ordained any such time for them; and he turns to this one, whose disposition he knew to have been like his own, and therefore hoped his conversion would be so too; for nothing gives the faithful servants of God a greater encouragement that their labours shall prosper upon others, than a consideration of their own case, and an acknowledgment what God hath done for their souls. When the fear of God wrought upon himself, then he comes to his fellow, *Nonne tu times?* Fearest not thou? First, *Nonne tu?* We have not that advantage over our auditory, which he had over his, to know that in every particular man, there is some reason why he should be more afraid of God's judgments than another man. But every particular man, who is acquainted with his own history, may be such a preacher to himself, and ask himself, *Nonne tu?* Hast not thou more reason to stand in fear of God than any other

[17] Luke xxiii. 35. [18] Lam. i. 12. [19] Psalm xxii. 7.
[20] Psalm lxix. 26. [21] Psalm xxii. 4. [22] John xix. 1.

man, for anything that thou knowest? Knowest thou any man so deeply indebted to God, so far behind-hand with God, so much in danger of his executions as thou art? Thou knowest not his colluctations before he fell, nor his repentances since: when thou hearest St. Paul say, *Quorum maximus*, hadst not thou need say, *Nonne tu?* Dost not thou fear, who knowest more by thyself, than St. Paul's history hath told thee of St. Paul? for in all his history thou never seest anything done by him against his conscience: and is thy case as good as that? But to this thief, this thief presses this no farther, but this, What hope soever of future happiness in this life, by the coming of a Messias, those that stay in the world can expect, what is all that to thee, who art going out of the world? *Quid mihi*, says that man, who looked upon the rainbow when he was ready to drown; Though God have promised not to drown the world, what is that to me, if I must drown? I must be bold to say to thee, *Quid tibi?* If God by his omnipotent power will uphold his Gospel in the world, he owes thee no thanks, if thou do nothing in thy calling towards the upholding of it. *Nonne tu?* Dost not thou fear, that though that stand, God's judgment will fall upon thee for having put no hand to the staying of it?

Nonne tu times? It had been unreasonable to have spoken to him of the love of God first now, when those heavy judgments were upon him. The fear of God is always the beginning of wisdom; most of all in calamity, which is properly *vehiculum timoris*, the chariot to convey, and the seal to imprint this fear in us. *Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; therefore I said Sarah was my sister*[13]. Where there is not the fear of God in great persons, other men dare not proceed clearly with them, but with disguises and modifications: they dare not attribute their prosperity, and good success to the goodness of God, but must attribute it to their wisdom: they dare not attribute their crosses and ill success to the justice of God, but must attribute it to the weakness or falsehood of servants and ministers: where there is not this fear of God, there is no directness. Beloved, there is love enough at all hands; it is a loving age everywhere, love enough in every corner, such as it

[13] Gen. xx. 11.

is; but scarce any fear amongst us. Great men are above fear, no envy can reach them: miserable men are below fear, no change can make them worse: and for persons of middle rank, and more public fears, of plagues, of famines, or such, the abundant and overflowing goodness of God hath so long accustomed us to miraculous deliverances, that we fear nothing, but think to have miracles in ordinary, and neglect ordinary remedies.

But what should this man fear now? His glass was run out, his bell was rung out, he was a dead man, condemned, and judged, and executed; What should he fear? In Rome, as the vestal virgins which died, were buried within the city, because they died innocent: so persons which were executed by justice, were buried there too, because they had satisfied the law, and thereby seemed to be restored to their innocence. So that condemned persons might seem least of all to fear. But yet, *Nonne times Deum?* Fearest not thou God, for all that? Have not the laws of men, witnesses, judges, and executioners, all men, brought fearful things upon thee already? and is it not a fearful thing, if all those real torments, be but types and figures of those greater, which God will inflict upon thee after death? How easily hath a cunning malefactor sometimes deluded and circumvented a mild justice at home, that lives neighbourly by him, and is almost glad to be deceived in favour of life! But how would this man be confounded, if he came to be examined at the council-table, or by the king! *Omni severius quæstione à te interrogari*, was said by one of the panegyrics to one of the Roman emperors, That it was worse than the rack, to be examined by him. When we come to stand naked before God, without that apparel which he made for us, without all righteousness, and without that apparel which we made for ourselves; not a fig-leaf, not an excuse to cover us; if we think to deal upon his affections, he hath none; if we think to hide our sins, he was with us when we did them, and saw them: we shall see then by his examination, that he knows them better than we ourselves.

And to this purpose, to show God's particular judgment upon all men, and all actions then, it is, that St. Augustine[24] (if that sermon which is the hundred and thirtieth *de tempore*, be his, for

[24] Tom. x. in Appen. Ser. 49.

it is in the copies of Chrysostom too) reads those words thus: *Nonne times Deum tuum?* Fearest not thou thy God? That if a man would go about to wrap up all in God's general providence (all must be as God hath appointed it) he might be brought to this particular consideration, that he is *Deus tuus;* not only God of the world, and God of mankind, but thy God: so far thine, as he shall be thy judge: in all senses, and to all intendments, that may make him the heavier to thee, he is thy God: he shall be thy God in his severe examinations, as he is *scrutator renum*, as he searches thy reins: thy God, in putting off all respect of persons, in renouncing kindred, *mater et frater;* they are of kin to him, that do his will: and in renouncing acquaintance at the last day, *Nescio vos*, I know not whence you are: and thy God in pronouncing judgment then, *Ite maledicti*, Go ye accursed. He shall be still *Deus tuus*, thy God, till it come to *Jesus tuus*, till it come to the point of redemption and salvation; he shall be thy God, but not thy Redeemer, thy Saviour. And therefore it is well urged in this place by St. Augustine, *Nonne times Deum tuum? Fearest not thou thy God?*

Especially this great calamity being actually upon thee now. St. Peter when he would have converted Agrippa and all the company, he wishes they were all like him, in all things, *Exceptis vinculis*, excepting his bands[25]. This new convert deals upon his fellow with that argument, *Quia in iisdem vinculis;* since thou art under the same condemnation, thou shouldest have the same affections. Now the general condemnation, which is upon all mankind, that they must die, this alone scarce frights any man, scarce averts any man from his purposes. He that should first put to sea in a tempest, he might easily think, it were in the nature of the sea to be rough always. He that sees every churchyard swell with the waves and billows of graves, can think it no extraordinary thing to die; when he knows he set out in a storm, and he was born into the world upon that condition, to go out of it again. But when Nathan would work upon David, he puts him a particular case, appliable to himself; and when he had drawn from him an implicit condemnation of himself, then he applies it. When David had said, *As the Lord liveth, the man*

[25] Acts xxvi. 29.

that hath done this shall surely die[26]; and Nathan upon that had said, *Thou art the man:* then David came to his *Peccavi coram Domino, I have sinned against the Lord;* and Nathan to his *Transtulit Dominus, The Lord hath taken away thy sin.* And so this preacher, *Qui clavis confixus non habuit sensum confixum*[27], who though he were crucified in body, had his spirit and his charity at liberty, he presses his fellow to this fear, therefore, because he is under a particular condemnation; not because he must die, but because he must die thus: and every man may find some such particular condemnation in himself, and in his own crosses, if he will but read his own history in a true copy.

It is *sub eadem*, the same condemnation. If this identity be intended, in comparison with Christ's condemnation, the comparison holds only in this: Judgment is given upon you both, execution began upon you both, both equally ignominious, equally miserable in the eye of the world: why dost thou insult upon him, revile him, who art in as ill state as he? thou seest him, who (though thou knowest it not,) had other manner of assurances, than thou canst have, in agonies, in fears, in complaints, in lamentations: why fearest not thou, being under the same condemnation? If this *eadem condemnatio* be intended in comparison of himself that speaks, then the comparison holds only thus, Thou hast no better a life than I, thou art no further from thy death than I; and the consideration of my condemnation, hath brought me to fear God: why shouldest not thou fear, being under the same condemnation? especially there being no adjourning of the court, no putting off the sizes, no reprieve for execution: thou art now under the same condemnation, the same execution: why shouldst thou not fear now? why shouldst thou not go so far towards thy conversion this minute? To end all, it is all our cases; we are all under the same condemnation: what condemnation? under the same as Adam, the same as Cain, the same as Sodom, the same as Judas. *Quod cuiquam accidit, omnis potest;* what sin soever God hath found in any, he may find in us; either that we have fallen into it, by our misuse of his grace, or should fall into it, if he should withdraw his grace. In those that are damned before, we are damned in effigy; such as we are, are

[26] 2 Sam. xii. 5. [27] Augustine.

damned; and we might be, but that he which was *Medius inter personas divinas*, in his glory, in heaven; and *Medius inter prophetas*, in his transfiguration in Mount Thabor; and *Medius inter latrones*, in his humiliation in this text, is *Medius in ternos*, in the midst of the Christian church, in the midst of us, in this congregation, and takes into his own mouth now, the words which he put into the thief's mouth then, and more: Since I have been made a man, and no man; been born, and died; since I have descended, and descended to the earth, and below the earth; since I have done and suffered so much to rescue you from this condemnation, *Nonne timetis?* will ye not fear the Lord, but choose still to be under the same condemnation?

SERMON CXXXIII.

A LENT SERMON PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, FEBRUARY 12, 1618.

EZEKIEL XXXiii. 32.

And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

As there lies always upon God's minister, a *væ si non*, woe be unto me, if I preach not the Gospel, if I apply not the comfortable promises of the Gospel, to all that groan under the burden of their sins; so there is *onus visionis*, (which we find mentioned in the prophets) it was a pain, a burden to them, to be put to the denunciation of God's heavy judgments upon the people: but yet those judgments, they must denounce, as well as propose those mercies: woe be unto us, if we bind not up the broken-hearted; but woe be unto us too, if we break not that heart that is stubborn: woe be unto us, if we settle not, establish not the timorous and trembling, the scattered, and fluid, and distracted soul, that cannot yet attain, entirely and intensely, and confidently and constantly, to fix itself upon the merits and mercies of Christ Jesus; but woe be unto us much more, if we do not

shake, and shiver, and throw down the refractory and rebellious soul, whose incredulity will not admit the history, and whose security in presumptuous sins will not admit the working and application of those merits and mercies which are proposed to him. To this purpose, therefore, God makes his minister *speculatores;* I have set thee for their watchman, says God to this prophet; that so they might see and discern the highest sins of the highest persons, in the highest places: they are not only to look down towards the streets, and lanes, and alleys, and cellars, and reprehend the abuses and excesses of persons of lower quality there; all their service lies not below stairs, nor only to look into the chamber, and reprehend the wantonnesses and licentiousness of both sexes there; nor only unto the house-top and tarries, and reprehend the ambitious machinations and practices to get thither; but still they are *speculatores*, men placed upon a watch-tower, to look higher than all this, to look upon sins of a higher nature than these, to note and reprehend those sins, which are done so much more immediately towards God, as they are done upon colour and pretence of religion: and upon that station, upon the execution of that commission, is our prophet in this text, *Thou art unto them a very lovely song*, &c., *for they shall hear thy words, but they do them not.* Through this whole chapter, he presents matter of that nature, either of too confident, or too diffident a behaviour towards God. In the tenth verse, he reprehends their diffidence and distrust in God: this they say (says the prophet) *If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we live?* How should you live? says the prophet: thus you should live, by hearing what the Lord of Life hath said, *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.* In the twenty-fifth verse he reprehends their confidence; they say, Abraham was one, and he inherited this land; we are many, this land is given us for our inheritance: but say unto them, says God to the prophet there, *You lift up your eyes to idols, and you shed blood, and shall you possess the land? Ye defile one another's wife, and ye stand upon the sword, and shall ye possess the land?* We were but one, and are many; it is true: God hath testified his love, in multiplying inhabitants, and in uniting kingdoms; but if there be a lifting

up of eyes towards idols, a declination towards an idolatrous religion; if there be a defiling of one another's wife, and then standing upon the sword, that it must be matter of displeasure, or of quarrel, if one will not betray his wife, or sister, to the lust of the greatest person; shall we possess the land? shall we have a continuance of God's blessing upon us? we shall not. And as he thus represents their over-confident behaviour towards God; God is bound by his promise, and therefore we may be secure: and their over-diffident behaviour; God hath begun to show his anger upon us, and therefore there is no recovery: he reprehends also that distemper, which ordinarily accompanies this behaviour towards God, that is, an expostulation, and a disputing with God, and a censuring of his actions: in the twentieth verse, they come to say, *The way of the Lord is not equal;* that is, we know not how to deal with him, we know not where to find him; he promises mercies, and lays afflictions upon us; he threatens judgments upon the wicked, and yet the wicked prosper most of all; *The ways of the Lord are equal.* But, to this also God says by the prophet, *I will judge every one of you after his own ways. The ways of the Lord are unsearchable;* look ye to your own ways, for according to them, shall God judge you. And then after these several reprehensions, this watchman raises himself to the highest pinnacle of all, to discover the greatest sin of all, treason within doors, contemning of God in his own house, and in his presence; that is, a coming to church to hear the word of God preached, a pretence of cheerfulness and alacrity, in the outward service of God, yea a true sense and feeling of a delight in hearing of the word; and yet for all this, an unprofitable barrenness, and (upon the whole matter) a despiteful and a contumelious neglecting of God's purpose and intention, in his ordinance: for our voice is unto them but as a song to an instrument; they hear our words, but they do them not.

Though then some expositors take these words to be an increpation upon the people, that they esteemed God's ablest ministers, endued with the best parts, to be but as music, as a jest, as a song, as an entertainment; that they undervalued and disesteemed the whole service of God in the function of the ministry, and thought it either nothing, or but matter of state and

government, as a civil ordinance for civil order, and no more: yet I take this increpation to reach to a sin of another nature; that the people should attribute reverence enough, attention enough, credit enough to the preacher, and to his preachings, but yet when all that is done, nothing is done: they should hear willingly, but they do nothing of that which they had heard.

First then, God for his own glory promises here, that his prophet, his minister shall be *tuba*, as is said in the beginning of this chapter, a trumpet, to awaken with terror. But then, he shall become *carmen musicum*, a musical and harmonious charmer, to settle and compose the soul again in a reposed confidence, and in a delight in God: he shall be *musicum carmen*, music, harmony to the soul in his matter; he shall preach harmonious peace to the conscience: and he shall be *musicum carmen*, music and harmony in his manner; he shall not present the messages of God rudely, barbarously, extemporally; but with such meditation and preparation as appertains to so great an employment, from such a king as God, to such a state as his church: so he shall be *musicum carmen*, music, harmony, *in re et modo*, in matter and in manner: and then *musicum* so much farther (as the text adds) as that he shall have a pleasant voice, that is, to preach first sincerely (for a preaching to serve turns and humours, cannot, at least should not please any) but then it is to preach acceptably, seasonably, with a spiritual delight, to a discreet and rectified congregation, that by the way of such a holy delight, they may receive the more profit. And then he shall play well on an instrument; which we do not take here to be the working upon the understanding and affections of the auditory, that the congregation shall be his instrument; but as St. Basil says, *Corpus hominis, Organum Dei*, when the person acts that which the song says; when the words become works, this is a song to an instrument: for, as St. Augustine pursues the same purpose, *Psallere est ex preceptis Dei agere;* to sing, and to sing to an instrument, is to perform that holy duty in action, which we speak of in discourse: and God shall send his people preachers furnished with all these abilities, to be *tubæ*, trumpets to awaken them; and then to be *carmen musicum*, to sing God's mercies in their ears, in reverent, but yet in a diligent, and thereby a delightful

manner; and so to be music in their preaching, and music in their example, in a holy conversation; *Eris*, says God to this prophet, such a one thou shalt be, thou shalt be such a one in thyself; and then *eris illis*, thou shalt be so to them, to the people: to them thou shalt be *tuba*, a trumpet, thy preaching shall awaken them, and so bring them to some sense of their sins: to them thou shalt be *carmen musicum*, music and harmony; both *in re*, in thy matter, they shall conceive an apprehension or an offer of God's mercy through thee; and *in modo*, in the manner; they shall confess, that thy labours work upon them, and move them, and affect them, and that that unpremeditated, and drowsy, and cold manner of preaching, agrees not with the dignity of God's service: they shall acknowledge (says God to this prophet) thy pleasant voice; confess thy doctrine to be good, and confess thy playing upon an instrument, acknowledge thy life to be good too; for, in testimony of all this, *audient* (says the text) they shall hear this. Now, every one that might come, does not so; businesses, nay less than businesses, vanities, keep many from hence; less than vanities, nothing; many, that have nothing to do, yet are not here: all are not come that might come; nor are all that are here, come hither; penalty of law, observation of absences, invitation of company, affection to a particular preacher, collateral respects, draw men; and they that are drawn so, do not come; neither do all that are come, hear; they sleep, or they talk: but *audient*, says our text, they shall be here, they shall come, they shall hear; they shall press to hear: every one that would come, if he might sit at ease, will not be troubled for a sermon: but our case is better, *audient*, they shall rise earlier than their fellows, come hither sooner, endure more pains, hearken more diligently, and conceive more delight than their fellows: *audient*, they will hear: but then, after all (which is the height of the malediction, or increpation) *non facient*, they will not do it; *Non facient quæ dixeris*, They will do nothing of that which thou hast said to them; nay, *non facient quæ dixerunt*, They will do nothing of that, which during the time of the sermons, they had said to their own souls, they would do; so little hold shall God's best means, and by his best instruments, take of them; *They shall hear thy words, and shall not do them.*

These then are our parts that make up this increpation: first, the prophet shall do his part fully: secondly, the people shall do some of theirs: but then lastly, they shall fail in the principal, and so make all ineffectual. First, God will send them prophets that shall be *tubæ*, trumpets; and not only that, but *speculatores;* not only trumpets which sound according to the measure of breath that is blown into them, but they themselves are the watchmen that are to sound them: not trumpets to sound out what airs the occasion of the present time, or what airs the affections of great persons infuse into them; for so they are only trumpets, and not trumpeters; but God hath made them both: and, as in civil matters, *Angusta innocentia est, ad legem bonum esse*[1], That is but a narrow, but a faint honesty, to be no honester than a man must needs be, no honester than the law, or than his bodily sickness constrains him to be; so are these trumpets short-winded trumpets, if they sound no oftener than the canons enjoin them to sound; for, they must preach in season and out of season: if the canonical season be but once a month, the preaching between, is not so unseasonable, but that it is within the apostle's precept too. If that be done, if the watchman sound the trumpet, says the beginning of this chapter (when you see it is the watchman himself that sounds, and not another to sound him; he is neither to be an instrument of others, nor is he to sound always by others, and spare his own breath) but if the watchman do duly sound, then there is an *Euge bone serve*, belongs to him; *Well done good and faithful servant, enter into thy Master's joy:* and if he be not heard, or be not followed, then there is a *væ Bethsaida*, a woe belonging to that city, and to that house; for, if those works had been done in Sodom, if all this preaching had been at Rome, Rome would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. I set watchmen over you, says God in another prophet[2], *Et dixi, audite*, I said unto you, hearken to them: so far God addresses himself to them, speaks personally to them, *super vos*, and *audite vos;* I sent to you, and hear you: but when they would not hear, then he changes the person, *Et dixerunt*, says that text, And they said, We will not hear: after this stubbornness, God does not so much as speak to them: it is not *dixistis*, you said it; God will have no

[1] Seneca. [2] Jer. vi. 17.

more to do with them; but it is *dixerunt*, they said it; God speaks of them as of strangers. But this is not altogether the case in our text: God shall send prophets, trumpets, and trumpeters, that is, preachers of his word, and not the word of men; and they shall be heard willingly too; for as they are *tubæ*, trumpets, so they shall be *musicum carmen*, acceptable music to them that hear them.

They shall be so, first *in re*, in their matter, in the doctrine which they preach. The same trumpets that sound the alarm (that is, that awakens us from our security) and that sounds the battle (that is, that puts us into a colluctation with ourselves, with this world, with powers and principalities, yea into a wrestling with God himself and his justice) the same trumpet sounds the parley too, calls us to hearken to God in his word, and to speak to God in our prayers, and so to come to treaties and capitulations for peace; and the same trumpet sounds a retreat too, that is, a safe reposing of our souls in the merit, and in the wounds of our Saviour Christ Jesus. And in this voice they are *musicum carmen*, a love-song (as the text speaks) in proposing the love of God to man, wherein he loved him so, as that he gave his only begotten Son for him. God made this whole world in such an uniformity, such a correspondency, such a concinnity of parts, as that it was an instrument, perfectly in tune: we may say, the trebles, the highest strings were disordered first; the best understandings, angels and men, put this instrument out of tune. God rectified all again, by putting in a new string, *semen mulieris*, the seed of the woman, the Messiah: and only by sounding that string in your ears, become we *musicum carmen*, true music, true harmony, true peace to you. If we shall say, that God's first string in this instrument, was reprobation, that God's first intention, was, for his glory to damn man; and that then he put in another string, of creating man, that so he might have somebody to damn; and then another of enforcing him to sin, that so he might have a just cause to damn him; and then another, of disabling him to lay hold upon any means of recovery: there is no music in all this, no harmony, no peace in such preaching. But if we take this instrument, when God's hand tuned it the second time, in the promise of a Messiah, and offer of the love and

mercy of God to all that will receive it in him; then we are truly *musicum carmen*, as a love-song, when we present the love of God to you, and raise you to the love of God in Christ Jesus: for, for the music of the spheres, whatsoever it be, we cannot hear it; for the decrees of God in heaven, we cannot say we have seen them; our music is only that salvation which is declared in the Gospel to all them, and to them only, who take God by the right hand, as he delivers himself in Christ.

So they shall be music *in re*, in their matter, in their doctrine; and they shall be also *in modo*, in their manner of presenting that doctrine. Religion is a serious thing, but not a sullen; religious preaching is a grave exercise, but not a sordid, not a barbarous, not a negligent. There are not so eloquent books in the world, as the Scriptures: except those names of tropes and figures, which the grammarians and rhetoricians put upon us, and we may be bold to say, that in all their authors, Greek and Latin, we cannot find so high, and so lively examples, of those tropes, and those figures, as we may in the Scriptures: whatsoever hath justly delighted any man in any man's writings, is exceeded in the Scriptures. The style of the Scriptures is a diligent, and an artificial style; and a great part thereof in a musical, in a metrical, in a measured composition, in verse. The greatest mystery of our religion, indeed the whole body of our religion, the coming, and the kingdom of a Messiah, of a Saviour, of Christ, is conveyed in a song, in the third chapter of Habakkuk: and therefore the Jews say, that that song cannot yet be understood, because they say the Messiah is not yet come. His greatest work, when he was come, which was his union and marriage with the church, and with our souls, he hath also delivered in a piece of a curious frame, Solomon's song of songs. And so likewise, long before, when God had given all the law, he provided, as himself says, a safer way, which was to give them a heavenly song of his own making[s]: for that song, he says there, he was sure they would remember. So the Holy Ghost hath spoken in those instruments, whom he chose for the penning of the Scriptures, and so he would in those whom he sends for the preaching thereof: he would put in them a care of delivering God messages,

[s] Deut. xxxi. 19.

with consideration, with meditation, with preparation; and not barbarously, not suddenly, not occasionally, not extemporarily, which might derogate from the dignity of so great a service. That ambassador should open himself to a shrewd danger and surprisal, that should defer the thinking upon his oration, till the prince, to whom he was sent, were reading his letters of credit: and it is a late time of meditation for a sermon, when the psalm is singing. *Loquere Domine*, says the prophet; Speak, O Lord: but it was when he was able to say, *Ecce paratus*, Behold I am prepared for thee to speak in me: if God shall be believed, to speak in us, in our ordinary ministry, it must be, when we have, so as we can, fitted ourselves, for his presence. To end this, then are we *musicum carmen in modo*, music to the soul, in the manner of our preaching, when in delivering points of divinity, we content ourselves with that language, and that phrase of speech, which the Holy Ghost hath expressed himself in, in the Scriptures: for to delight in the new and bold terms of heretics, furthers the doctrine of heretics too. And then also, are we *musicum carmen*, when, according to the example of men inspired by the Holy Ghost, in writing the Scriptures, we deliver the messages of God, with such diligence, and such preparation, as appertains to the dignity of that employment.

Now these two, to be music both these ways, in matter and in manner, concur and meet in the next, which is, to have a pleasant voice: *Thou art a lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice.* First, a voice they must have, they must be heard: if they silence themselves, by their ignorance, or by their laziness; if they occasion themselves to be silenced, by their contempt and contumacy, both ways they are inexcusable; for a voice is essential to them, that denominates them: John Baptist hath other great names; even the name of Baptist, is a great name, when we consider whom he baptized; him, who baptized the Baptist himself, and all us, in his own blood. So is his name of preacher, the forerunner of Christ (for in that name he came before him, who was before the world;) so is his *propheta*, that he was a prophet, and then, more than a prophet; and then, the greatest among the sons of women; these were great names, but yet the name that he chose, is *Vox clamantis*, *The voice of him*

that cries in the wilderness. What names and titles soever we receive in the school, or in the church, or in the state; if we lose our voice, we lose our proper name, our Christian name. But then, John Baptist's name is not a voice, any voice, but the voice: in the prophecy of Esay, in all the four evangelists, constantly, the voice. Christ is *verbum*, the word; not a word, but the word: the minister is *vox*, voice; not a voice, but the voice, the voice of that word, and no other; and so, he is a pleasing voice, because he pleases him that sent him, in a faithful executing of his commission, and speaking according to his dictate; and pleasing to them to whom he is sent, by bringing the Gospel of peace and reparation to all wounded, and scattered, and contrite spirits.

They shall be music both ways, in matter, and in manner; and pleasing both ways, to God, and to men: but yet to none of these, except the music be perfect, except it be to an instrument, that is, as we said at first, out of St. Basil, and St. Augustine, except the doctrine be expressed in the life too: Who will believe me when I speak, if by my life they see I do not believe myself! How shall I be believed to speak heartily against ambition and bribery in temporal and civil places, if one in the congregation be able to jog him that sits next him, and tell him, That man offered me money for spiritual preferment! To what a dangerous scorn shall I open myself, and the service of God, if I shall declaim against usury, and look him in the face that hath my money at use! One such witness in the congregation, shall outpreach the preacher: and God shall use his tongue (perchance his malice) to make the service of that preacher ineffectual. *Quam speciosi pedes Evangelizantium*, says St. Paul[4]! (and he says that out of Esay, and out of Nahum too, as though the Holy Ghost had delighted himself with that phrase in expressing it) how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel! Men look most to our feet, to our ways: the power that makes men admire, may lie in our tongues; but the beauty that makes men love, lies in our feet, in our actions. And so we have done with all the pieces that constitute our first part: God, in his promise to that nation, prophesied upon us, that which he hath abun-

[4] Rom. x.

dantly performed, a ministry, that should first be trumpets, and then music: music, in fitting a reverent manner, to religious matter; and music, in fitting an instrument to the voice, that is, their lives to their doctrine. *Eris*, said God here to this prophet, *All this thou shalt be:* and that leads us into our second part.

Now, in this second part, there is more; for it is not only *eris*, thou shalt be so in thyself, and as thou art employed by me; but *eris illis*, thou shalt be so unto them, they shall receive thee for such, acknowledge thee to be such: God provides a great measure of ability in the prophet, and some measure of good inclination in the people. *Eris illis tuba*, thou shalt be to them, they shall feel thee to be a trumpet: they shall not say in their hearts, there is no God; they shall not say, Tush, the Lord sees us not, or he is a blind, or an indifferent God, or, the Lord is like one of us, he loves peace, and will be at quiet; but they shall acknowledge, that he is *Dominus exercituum*, the Lord of hosts, and that the prophet is his trumpet, to raise them up to a spiritual battle. *Eris illis tuba*, thou shalt be to them a trumpet, they shall not be secure in their sins; and *eris illis carmen musicum*, by thy preaching they shall come to confess, that God is a God of harmony, and not of discord; of order, and not of confusion; and that, as he made, so he governs all things, in weight, and number, and measure; that he hath a succession, and a hierarchy in his church; that it is a household of the faithful, and a kingdom of saints, and therefore regularly governed, and by order, and that in this government no man can give himself orders, no man can baptize himself, nor give himself the body and blood of Christ Jesus, nor preach to himself, nor absolve himself; and therefore they shall come to thee, whom they shall confess to be appointed by God, to convey these graces unto them: *eris illis carmen musicum:* from thee they shall accept that music, the orderly application of God's mercies, by visible and outward means in thy ministry in the church. *Eris illis vox suavis*, they shall confess thou preachest true doctrine, and appliest it powerfully to their consciences; and *eris illis vox ad citharam*, thou shalt be a voice to an instrument: they shall acknowledge thy life to be agreeable to thy doctrine; they shall quarrel thee, challenge thee in neither, not in doctrine, not in manners.

Such as God appoints thee to be, *eris*, thou shalt be; and *eris illis*, they shall respect thee as such, and reward thee as such: and they shall express that, in that which follows, *audient*, they shall hear thy word. The worldly man, though it trouble him to hear thee, though it put thorns and brambles into his conscience, yet though it be but to beget an opinion of holiness in others, *audiet*, he will hear thee. The fashional man, that will do as he sees great men do, if their devotion, or their curiosity, or their service and attendance, draw him hither, *audiet*, he will come with them, and he will hear. He that is disaffected in his heart, to the doctrine of our church, rather than incur penalties of statutes and canons, *audiet*, he will come, and hear: yea, there is more than that, intended, *audient*, they shall hear willingly; and more than that too, *audient*, they shall hear cheerfully, desirously. Here is none of that action which was in St. Stephen's persecutors, *continuerunt aures*[5], they withheld their ears, they withdrew themselves from hearing, they kept themselves out of distance; here is no such recusancy intended; neither is there any of their actions, *Qui obturant aures*, as the Psalmist says[6], The serpent does, who (as the fathers note often) stops one ear with laying it close to the ground, and the other with covering it with his tail: here is none of their action, *qui in durant*, nor *qui declinant*[7]; none that turneth away his ear (for even his prayer shall be an abomination, says Solomon[8]; his very being here is a sin) here, in our case, in our text, is none of these indispositions; but here is a ready, a willing, and (in appearance) a religious coming to hear: expectation, acceptation, acclamation, congratulation, remuneration, in a fair proportion; we complain of no want in any of these now. *Sumus*, God hath authorized us, and God hath exalted us, in some measure, to deliver his messages; and *sumus vobis*, you do not deny us to be such; you do not refuse, but you receive us, and his messages by us; you do hear our words. And that is all that belonged to our second part.

Now in both these former parts, who can discern, who would suspect any foundation to be laid for an increpation, any preparation for a malediction or curse! God will send good preachers

[5] Acts vii. 57.
[6] Psalm lviii.
[7] Jer. vii. 26.
[8] Prov. xxviii. 9.

to the people, and the people shall love their preaching; and yet, as he said to Samuel, He will do a thing, at which both the ears of him that hears it shall tingle[9]. Now, what is that in our case? This; he will aggravate their condemnation, therefore, because they have been so diligent herein, *et non fecerunt*, they have done nothing of that which they have heard. As our very repentance contracts the nature of sin, if we persevere not in that holy purpose; but, as though we had then made even with God, sin on again upon a new score: so this hearing itself is a sin, that is, such an aggravating circumstance, as changes the very nature of the sin, to them that hear so much, and do nothing. This is not a preparation of that curse in Ezekiel[10]; whether they will hear or forbear, yet they shall know, that a prophet hath been among them; that is, hear, or hear not, subsequent judgments shall bring them to see, that they might have heard: but here God accompanies them with a stronger grace, than so; *audient*, they will hear. There are vipers in the Psalm that will not hear, how wisely soever the charmers charm; but there is a generation of vipers[11] which do hear, and yet depart with none of their viperous nature: *O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come!* says John Baptist, there to the Pharisees and Sadducees, that came to his baptism. They had apprehended *tubam*, a warning, and they did come; but when they were come, he found them in their *non faciunt*, without any purpose of bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance.

Here then is St. Paul's *Judæus in abscondito*, a Jew inwardly[12]. Here is the true recusant, and the true non-conformitan; *audiunt, sed non faciunt:* he comes to hear, but never comes to do; there is recusancy: he confesses that he hath received good instruction, but he refuses to conform himself unto it; there is non-conformity. First, *non facient quæ dixeris*, they will not do those things which thou hast said; and yet, that is strange, since they confess thou sayest true: but yet that is not so strange; for they may be *duri sermonis;* though it be true that we say, it may be hard, and it may trouble them, and perchance damnify them in their profit, or mortify them in their pleasures. It may be we

[9] 1 Sam. iii. 11.
[10] Ezek. ii. 5.
[11] Matt. iii. 7.
[12] Rom. ii. 29.

may say, that thy relapsing into a sin formerly repented, submits thee again to all the punishment due to the former sin; and that is *durus sermo*, a hard saying: it may be we may say, that a repentance which hath all other formal parts of a true repentance, if it reach not to all the branches, and to all the specifying differences and circumstance of thy sins, so far as a diligent examination of thy conscience can carry thee, is a void repentance; and that is *durus sermo*, a hard saying. It may be we may say, that though thou hast truly and entirely repented, though thou do leave the practice of the sin, yet if thou do not also leave that which thou hast corruptly got by the ways of that sin, the sin itself lies upon thee still; and that is *durus sermo*, a hard saying: and Christ's own disciples forsook him, and forsook him for ever, *quia durus sermo*[13], because that which Christ said, seemed to them a hard saying. This we may say; and they may come to hear, and come to say we say true, and yet *non facient quæ dixeris*, never do any of that which we say, *quia duri sermones*, because we press things hardly upon them.

But yet that is not so strange, as *non facere quæ dixerint*, not to do those things which they have said themselves. That when, as the apostle says of the Corinthians, *Vos estis*, You are our epistle, not written with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God: so a man, by hearing, is become *evangelium sibi*, a gospel to himself; and by the preaching of the Gospel, is come to say, *Non amplius*, I will go, and sin no more, lest a worse thing fall unto me: yet he goes and sins again, fall what will, or can fall; and *non facit quæ dixerit*, he does not perform his own promise to himself. He is affected with some particular passage in a sermon, and then he comes to David's *secundum innocentiam; O Lord, deal with me according to my future innocence; show thy mercy to me, as I keep myself from that sin hereafter;* and then, *abominantur eum vestimenta ejus*[14], his old clothes defile him again, his old rags cast vermin upon him, his old habits of sin throw new dirt upon him. He goes out of the church as that man's son went from his father, who sent him to work in the vineyard, with that word in his mouth, *Eo Domine*, Sir, I go[15];

[13] John vi. 60. [14] Job ix. 31. [15] Matt. xxi. 28.

but he never went, he turns another way, *non facit quæ dixerat*, he keeps not his own word, with his own soul: when he is gone out of his right way, a sickness, a disgrace, a loss overtakes him, the arrows of the Almighty stick in him, and the venom thereof drinks up his spirit; temporal afflictions, and spiritual afflictions meet in him, like two clouds, and beat out a thunder upon him; like two currents, and swallow him; like two millstones, and grind him; and then he comes to his *Domine quid retribuam?* Lord, what shall I give thee, to deliver me now? and *non facit quæ dixerat*, he pays none of those vows, performs no part of that which he promised then. Christ had his *consummatum est*, and this sinner hath his: Christ ends his passion, and he ends his action; Christ ends his affliction, and he ends his affection: *Distulit securim, attulit securitatem*, says St. Augustine of this case; As soon as the danger is removed, his devotion is removed too. The end of all is, that what punishment soever God reserves for them, who never heard of the name of his Son Christ Jesus at all, or for them who have pretended to receive him, but have done it idolatrously, superstitiously; we that have heard him, we that have had the Scriptures preached and applied to us sincerely, shall certainly have the heavier condemnation, for having had that which they wanted: our multiplicity of preachers, and their assiduity in preaching; our true interpretation of their labours, when we do hear, and our diligent coming, that we may hear, shall leave us in worse state than they found us, *si non fecerimus*, if we do not do that which we hear. And to do the Gospel, is to do what we can for the preservation of the Gospel. I know what I can do, as a minister of the Gospel, and of God's Word; out of his Word I can preach against linsey-woolsey garments; out of his Word I can preach against ploughing with an ox, and with an ass, against mingling of religions. I know what I can do, as a father, as a master; I can preserve my family from attempts of Jesuits. Those that are of higher place, magistrates, know what they can do too: they know they can execute laws; if not to the taking of life, yet to the restraining of liberty: and it is no seditious saying, it is no sauciness, it is no bitterness, it is no boldness to say, that the spiritual death of those souls, who perish by the practice of those

seducers, whom they might have stopped, lies upon them. And how knows he, who lets a Jesuit escape, whether he let go but a fox, that will deceive some simple soul in matter of religion; or a wolf, who, but for the protection of the Almighty, would adventure upon the person of the highest of all? *Non facient quæ dixeris*, is as far as the text goes; They will not do that we say: but *quæ dixerint*, is more; they will not do that which themselves have said: but, *quæ juraverint*, is most of all; if they will not do that, which for the preservation of the Gospel, they have taken an oath to do, the increpation, the malediction intended by God, in this text, that all our preaching, and all our hearing shall aggravate our condemnation, will fall upon us: and therefore, this being the season, in which, especially, God affords you the performance of that part of this prophecy, assiduous, and laborious, and acceptable, and useful preaching; where all you, of all sorts, are likely to hear the duties of administration towards others, and of mortification in yourselves, powerfully represented unto you, this may have been somewhat necessarily said by me now, for the removing of some stones out of their way, and the chafing of that wax, in which they may thereby make the deeper and clearer impressions; that so, we may not only be to you, as a lovely song, sung to an instrument; nor you only hear our words, but do them. Amen.

SERMON CXXXIV.

A LENT SERMON PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, FEBRUARY 20, 1628.

JAMES ii. 12.

So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

THIS is one of those seven epistles, which Athanasius and Origen called catholic; that is, universal; perchance because they are

not directed to any one church, as some others are, but to all the Christian world: and St. Hierome called them canonical; perchance because all rules, all canons of holy conversation are comprised in these epistles: and Epiphanius, and Œcumenius called them circular; perchance, because as in a circle, you cannot discern which was the first point, nor in which, the compass begun the circle; so neither can we discern in these epistles, whom the Holy Ghost begins withal, whom he means principally, king or subject, priest or people, single or married, husband or wife, father or children, masters or servants; but universally, promiscuously, indifferently, they give all rules, for all actions, to all persons, at all times, and in all places; as in this text, in particular, which is not, by any precedent, or subsequent relation, by any connexion or coherence, directed upon any company, or any degree of men: for the apostle does not say, Ye princes, nor ye people; but ye, ye in general, to all, *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty:* so these epistles are catholic, so they are canonical, and they circular so. But yet, though in a circle we know not where the compass began, we know not which was the first point; yet we know, that the last point of the circle returns to the first, and so becomes all one; and as much as we know the last, we know the first point. Since then the last point of that circle, in which God hath created us to move, is a kingdom (for it is the kingdom of heaven) and it is a court (for it is that glorious court, which is the presence of God, in the communion of his saints) it is a fair and a pious conception, for this congregation, here present now in this place, to believe, that the first point of this circle of our apostle here, is a court too; and that the Holy Ghost, in proposing these duties in his general *ye*, does principally intend, ye that live in court, ye whom God brings so near to the sight of himself, and of his court in heaven, as that you have always the picture of himself, and the portraiture of his court in your eyes: for a religious king is the image of God, and a religious court is a copy of the communion of saints. And therefore be you content to think, that to you especially our apostle says here, *Ye*, ye who have a nearer propinquity to God, a more assiduous conversation with God, by having better helps than other inferior stations do afford (for

though God be seen in a weed, in a worm, yet he is seen more clearly in the sum) *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.*

Now, as the first devils were in heaven (for it was not the punishment which they feel in hell, but the sin which they committed in heaven, which made them devils) and yet the fault was not in God, nor in the place; so if the greatest sins be committed in courts (as even in Rome, where they will needs have an innocent church, yet they confess a guilty court) the faults are personal, theirs that do them, and there is no higher author of their sin. The apostle does not bid us say, that it is so in courts; but lest it should come to be so, he bids us give these rules to courts, *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by a law of liberty.* First then, here is no express precept given, no direct commandment, to speak: the Holy Ghost saw, there would be speaking enough in courts; for, though there may be a great sin in silence, a great prevarication in not speaking in a good cause, or for an oppressed person; yet the lowest voice in a court, whispering itself, speaks aloud, and reaches far; and therefore, here is only a rule to regulate our speech, *Sic loquimini*, So speak ye. And then, as here is no express precept for speaking, so here is no express precept for doing; the Holy Ghost saw, there would be doing enough, business enough in court: for, as silence, and half-silence, whispering, may have a loud voice; so, even undoing may be a busy doing; and therefore, here is only a rule to regulate our doings too, *Sic facite*, So do ye. And lastly, as there is speaking enough, even in silence, and doing enough, even in undoing, in court; so the court is always under judgment enough. Every discontented person that hath missed his preferment, though he have not merited it; every drunkard that is over-heat, though not with his own wine; every conjecturing person, that is not within the distance to know the ends, or the ways of great actions, will judge the highest counsels, and executions of those counsels. The court is under judgment enough, and they take liberty enough; and therefore here is a rule to regulate our liberty, a law of liberty: *So speak ye, and*, &c. But though for the more benefit of the present congregation, we fix the first point of this circle, that is, the principal purpose of the Holy Ghost, upon

the court; yet our text is an amphitheatre. An amphitheatre consists of two theatres: our text hath two parts, in which, all men, all may sit, and see themselves acted; first, in the obligation that is laid upon us, upon us all, *Sic loquimini, sic facite:* and then in the reason of this holy diligence, and religious cautelousness, *Quia judicandi*, Because you are all to be judged, by, &c., which two general parts, the obligation, and the reason, flowing into many subdivided branches, I shall, I think, do better service, both to your understandings, and to your memory, and to your affections, and consciences, to present them as they shall arise anon, in their order, than to pour them out, all at once now.

First then, in our first part, we look to our rule, in the first duty, our speaking; *Sic loquimini*, So speak ye. The comic poet gives us a good caution, *Si servus semper consuescat silentio, fiet nequam;* That servant that says nothing, thinks ill. As our Nullifidians, men that put all upon works, and no faith; and our Solifidians, men that put all upon faith and no works, are both in the wrong; so there is a danger in *multiloquio*, and another in *nulliloquio:* he that speaks over freely to me, may be a man of dangerous conversation; and the silent and reserved man, that makes no play, but observes, and says nothing, may be more dangerous than he: as the Roman emperor professed to stand more in fear of one pale man, and lean man, than of twenty that studied and pursued their pleasures, and loved their ease, because such would be glad to keep things in the state they then were, but the other sort affected changes: so for the most part, he that will speak, lies as open to me, as I to him; speech is the balance of conversation. Therefore, as God is not *merx*, but *pretium;* gold is not ware, but the price of all ware; so speaking is not doing, but yet fair-speaking prepares an acceptation before, and puts a value after, upon the best actions. God hath made other creatures *gregalia*, sociable, besides man; sheep, and deer, and pigeons, will flock, and herd, and troop, and meet together; but when they are met, they are not able to tell one another why they meet. Man only can speak; silence makes it but a herding: that that makes conversation, is speech, *Qui datum deserit, respuit datorem*, says Tertullian. He that uses not a benefit,

reproaches his benefactor. To declare God's goodness, that hath enabled us to speak, we are bound to speak: speech is the glue, the cement, the soul of conversation, and of religion too.

Now, your conversation is in heaven; and therefore *loquimini Deo*, first speak to him that is in heaven, speak to God. Some of the Platonic philosophers thought it a profanation of God, to speak to God; they thought that when our thoughts were made prayers, and that the heart flowed into the tongue, and that we had invested and apparelled our meditations with words, this was a kind of painting, and dressing, and a superfluous diligence, that rather tasted of human affections, than such a sincere service, as was fit for the presence of God; only the first conceptions, the first ebullitions and emanations of the soul, in the heart, they thought to be a fit sacrifice to God, and all verbal prayer to be too homely for him. But God himself, who is all spirit, hath yet put on bodily lineaments, head, and hands, and feet, yea and garments too, in many places of Scripture, to appear, that is, to manifest himself to us: and when we appear to God, though our devotion be all spiritual, as he is all spirit, yet let us put on lineaments and apparel upon our devotions, and digest the meditations of the heart, into words of the mouth. God came to us *in verbo*, in the word; for Christ is, the word that was made flesh. Let us, that are Christians, go to God so, too, that the words of our mouth, as well as the meditations of our heart, may be acceptable to him. Surely, God loves the service of prayer, or he would never have built a house for prayer; and therefore we justly call public prayer, the Liturgy, service: love that place, and love that service in that place, prayer. They will needs make us believe, that St. Francis preached to birds, and beasts, and stones; but they will not go about to make us believe that those birds, and beasts, and stones joined with St. Francis in prayer. God can speak to all things; that is the office of preaching, to speak to others: but, of all, only man can speak to God; and that is the office of prayer. It is a blessed conversation, to spend time in discourse, in communication with God. God *went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham*[1]. When we leave praying, God leaves us: but God left not Abraham, as long as

[1] Gen. xviii. ult.

he had any thing to say to God; and we have always something to say unto him. He loves to hear us tell him, even those things which he knew before; his benefits in our thankfulness, and our sins in our confessions, and our necessities in our petitions. And therefore having so many occasions to speak to God, and to speak of God, David ingeminates that, and his ingemination implies a wonder, O that men would (and it is strange if men will not) O that men would, says he more than once or twice, O that men would praise the Lord, and tell the wondrous works that he hath done for the sons of men! for, David determines not his precept in that, Be thankful unto him; for a thankfulness may pass in private, but *Be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name*[a]. Glorify him in speaking to him, in speaking of him, in speaking for him.

Loquimini Deo, speak to God; and *loquimini diis*, speak to them whom God hath called gods. As religious kings are bound to speak to God by way of prayer; so those who have that sacred office, and those that have that honourable office to do so, are bound to speak to kings by way of counsel. God hath made all good men partakers of the divine nature; they are the sons of God, the seed of God; but God hath made kings partakers of his office, and administration. And as between man and himself, God hath put a mediator, that consists of God and man; so between princes and people, God hath put mediators too, who considered in themselves, retain the nature of the people (so Christ did of man) but considered in their places, have fair and venerable beams of his power, and influences of him upon them. And as our mediator Christ Jesus found always his Father's ears open to him; so do the church and state enter blessedly and successfully, by these mediators, into the ears of the king. Of our mediator Christ himself, it is said, *That he offered up prayers, and strong cries, and tears*[b]; even Christ was put to some difficulties in his mediation for those that were his; but he was heard, says that text, in that he feared. Even in those things, wherein, in some emergent difficulties, they may be afraid they shall not, these mediators are graciously and opportunely heard too, in the due discharge of their offices. That which was David's prayer,

[a] Psalm c. 4. [b] Heb. v. 7.

is our possession, our happiness, *Let not the foot of pride come against us*[4]: we know there is no pride in the head; and because there is no fault in the hands neither, that is, in them, into whose hands this blessed mediatorship is committed, by the great places of power, and counsel, which they worthily hold; the foot of pride, foreign, or home-oppression, does not, shall not tread us down. And for the continuation of this happiness, let me have leave to say, with Mordecai's humility, and earnestness too, to all such mediators, that which he said to Esther, *Who knows whether thou beest not brought to this place for this purpose*[5], To speak that, which his sacred and gracious ears, to whom thou speakest, will always be well pleased to hear, when it is delivered by them, to whom it belongs to speak it, and in such humble and reserved manner, as such sovereign persons as owe an account but to God, should be spoke to? *Sic loquimini Deo*, So let kings speak to God, (that was our first) *Sic loquimini diis*, So let them, whom kings trust, speak to kings whom God hath called gods, (that was our second.) And then, a third branch in this rule of our first duty, is, *Sic loquimini imaginibus Dei*, So speak you to God's images, to men of condition inferior to yourselves; for they also are images of God, as you are.

And this is truly, most literally the purpose of the apostle here, that you undervalue no man for his outward appearance; that you overvalue no man for his goodly apparel, or gold rings; that you say not to a poor man, Stand thou there; or if you admit him to sit, Sit here under my footstool. But it is a precept of accessibleness, and of affability; affability, that is, a civility of the city of God, and a courtship of the court of heaven, to receive other men, the images of God, with the same easiness that God receives you. God stands at the door, and knocks[6], and stays our leisure, to see if we will open, and let him in: even at the door of his beloved, he stood, and *knocked, till his head was filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night*[7]. But God puts none of us to that, to which he puts himself, and his Christ: but, *Knock*, says he, *and it shall be opened unto you*[8]; no staying

[4] Psalm xxxvi. 11. [5] Esther iv. 14. [6] Rev. iii. 20.
[7] Cant. v. 2. [8] Matt. vii. 7.

at the door, opened as soon as you knock. The nearest that our expositors can come, to find what it was that offended God, in Moses' striking of the rock for water, is, that *he struck it twice*[9]; that he did not believe that God would answer his expectation at one striking. God is no inaccessible God, that he may not be come to; nor inexorable, that he will not be moved, if he be spoken to; nor dilatory, that he does not that he does, seasonably. Daniel presents God *antiquum Dierum*, as an old man; but that is as a reverend, not as a froward person. *Mens in sermonibus nostris habitat, et gubernat verba*[10]: The soul of man is incorporate in his word; as he speaks, we think he thinks: *Et bonus paterfamilias, in illo primo vestibulo æstimatur*, says the same father. As we believe that to be a free house, where there is an easy entrance; so we doubt the less of a good heart, if we find charitable and courteous language. But yet there is an excess in this too, in this self-effusion, this pouring of a man's self out, in fair, and promising language. Inaccessibleness is the fault, which the apostle aims at here: and truly the most inaccessible man that is, is the over-liberal, and profuse promiser: he is therefore the most inaccessible, because he is absent, when I am come to him, and when I do speak with him. To a retired, to a reserved man, we do not easily get; but when we are there, he is there too: to an open and liberal promiser we get easily; but when we are with him, he is away, because his heart, his purpose is not there. But, *sic loquimini Deo*, so speak ye to God (that is a remembrance to kings) *Sic loquimini diis*, so speak ye to them whom God hath called gods (that is a remembrance to mediators between kings and subjects.) *Sic loquimini imaginibus Dei*, so speak ye to God's image, to all men (that is a remembrance to all that possess any superiority over others) as that your *loquimini* may be accompanied with a *facite*, your saying with doing, your good words with good actions: for so our apostle joins them here, *So speak ye, and so do:* and so we are come to our second rule; from the rule of our words, to the rule of our actions.

John Baptist was all voice, yet John Baptist was a forerunner of Christ. The best words are but words, but they are the forerunners of deeds: but Christ himself, as he was God himself, is

[9] Numb. xx. 10. [10] Ambrose.

purus actus, all action, all doing. Comfortable words are good cordials; they revive the spirits, and they have the nature of such occasional physic; but deeds are our food, our diet, and that that constantly nourishes us. *Non verbo*, says the apostle; let us not love in word, nor in tongue; but in deed, and in truth[11]. Not that we may not love in words; but that our deeds are the true seals of that love, which was also love, when it was in words. But *Ne quod luxuriat in flore, attenuetur et hebetetur in fructu*[12]; lest that tree that blew early and plentifully, blast before it knit, second your good words with actions too. It is the husbandry and the harvest of the righteous man; (as it gathered in David) the mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom[13]: so we read it; there it is in the tongue, in words only: the vulgar hath it *meditatur*, he meditates it; so the heart is got in. But the original, *hagah*, is noted to signify, *fructificavit*, he brings forth fruits thereof; and so the hand is got in too: and when that which is well spoken, was well meant, and hath been well expressed in action, that is the husbandry of the righteous man; then his harvest is all in. It is the way of God himself; Philo Judæus notes[14], that the people are said to have seen the noise, and the voice of God; because, whatsoever God says, it determines in action: if we may hear God, we may see him; what he says, he does too. Therefore from that example of God himself, St. Gregory directs us; We must, says he, show our love, *Et veneratione sermonis, et ministerio largitatis*, what a fair respect in words, and what a real supply in deeds. Nay, when we look upon our pattern, that is, God, Tertullian notes well, that God prevented his own speaking, by doing; *Benedicebat, quæ benefaciebat;* first he made all things good, and then he blessed them, that they might be better; first he wrought, and then he spoke. And so Christ's way and proceeding is presented to us too; so far from not doing when he speaks, as that he does before he speaks. Christ began to do, and to teach, says St Luke[15]; but first to do. And he was mighty in deeds, and in words[16]; but first in deeds. We cannot write so well as our copy, to begin always at deeds, as God, and his Christ; but yet let us labour to

[11] 1 John. iii. 18. [12] Ambrose. [13] Psalm xxxvii. 30.
[14] Exod. xx. 18. [15] Acts i. 1. [16] Luke xxiv. 19.

write so fair after it, as first to afford comfortable words; and though our deeds come after, yet to have them from the beginning in our intention; and that we do them, not because we promised, but promise because we love to do good, and love to lay upon ourselves the obligation of a promise. The instrument and organ of nature was the eye; the natural man finds God in that he sees, in the creature. The organ of the law, which exalted, and rectified nature, was the hand; *Fac hoc et vives;* perform the law, and thou shalt live. So also, the organ of the Gospel is the ear, for faith comes by hearing; but then the organ of faith itself, is the hand too; a hand that lays hold upon the merits of Christ, for myself; and a hand that delivers me over to the church of God, in a holy life, and exemplary actions, for the edification of others. So that all, all from nature to grace, determines in action, in doing good. *Sic facite Deo*, so do good to God, in real assisting his cause: *Sic facite diis*, so do good to them, whom God hath called gods, in real secondings their religious purposes: *Sic facite imaginibus Dei*, so do good to the images of God, in relieving his distressed members, as that you do all this, upon that which is made the reason of all, in the second part of this text, Because you are to be judged by the law of liberty.

Timor futuri judicii hujus vitæ pædagogus[17]. Our schoolmaster to teach us to stand upright in the last judgment, is the meditation, and the fear of that judgment, in this life. It is our schoolmaster, and schoolmaster enough. I said unto the fool, thus and thus, says David[18]: and I said unto the wicked, thus and thus, says he: for, says he, God is the judge: he thought it enough to enlighten the understanding of the fool, enough to rectify the perverseness of the wicked, if he could set God before them, in that notion, as a judge: for, this is one great benefit from the present contemplation of the future judgment, that whosoever does truly, and advisedly believe, that ever he shall come to that judgment, is at it now; he that believes that God will judge him, is God's commissioner, God's delegate, and, in his name, judges himself now. Therefore it is a useful mistaking, which the Roman translation is fallen into, in this text, in reading it

[17] Basil. [18] Psalm LXXV. 4.

thus, *Sicut incipientis judicari;* So speak ye, and so do, as they upon whom the judgment were already begun. For, *Qui timet ante Christi tribunal præsentari*[19], He that is afraid to be brought to the last judgment, hath but one refuge, but one sanctuary, *Ascendat tribunal mentis suæ, et constituat se ante seipsum;* Let him cite himself before himself, give evidence himself against himself; and so guilty as he is found here, so innocent he shall stand there. Let him proceed upon himself, as Job did[20], and he is safe; I am afraid of all my sorrow, says he; afraid that I have not said enough against myself, nor repented enough; afraid that my sorrows have not been sincere, but mingled with circumstances of loss of health, or honour, or fortune, occasioned by my sins; and not only, not principally for the sin itself, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*, says he: but how much more than of my mirths and pleasures! To judge ourselves by the judgment of flatterers, that depend upon us; to judge ourselves by the event and success of things, (I am enriched, I am preferred by this course, and therefore all is well) to judge ourselves by example of others, (others do thus, and why not I?) all these proceedings are *coram non judice*, all these are literally *præmunire* cases, for they are appellations into foreign jurisdictions, and foreign judicatures. Only our own conscience rectified, is a competent judge. And they that have passed the trial of that judgment, do not so much rise to judgment at last, as stand and continue in judgment: their judgment, that is, their trial, is passed here; and there they shall only receive sentence, and that sentence shall be, *Euge bone serve; Well done, good and faithful servant;* since thou didst enter into judgment in the other world, enter into thy Master's joy in this. But howsoever we be prepared for that judgment, well, or not well; and howsoever the Judge be disposed towards us, well, or not well, there is this comfort given us here, that that judgment shall be *per legem*, by a law, we shall be judged by a law of liberty; which is our second branch in this second part.

The Jews that prosecuted the judgment against Christ, durst not do that without pretending a law: *Habemus legem*, say they, We have a law, and he hath transgressed that. The necessary

[19] Augustine. [20] Job ix. 28.

precipitations into sudden executions, to which states are forced in rebellious times, we are fain to call by the name of law, martial law. The torrents, and inundations, which invasive armies pour upon nations, we are fain to call by the name of law, the law of arms. No judgment, no execution, without the name, the colour, the pretence of law; for still men call for a law for every execution. And shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Shall God judge us, condemn us, execute us at the last day, and not by a law? by something that we never saw, never knew, never notified, never published, and judge me by that, and leave out the consideration of that law, which he bound me to keep! I ask St. Paul's question, *Where is the disputer of the world*[21]? Who will offer to dispute unnecessary things, especially where authority hath made it necessary to us, to forbear such disputations? *Blessed are the peace-makers that command*, and *blessed are the peace-keepers that obey*, and accommodate themselves to peace, in forbearing unnecessary and uncharitable controversies: but, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness[22]; the apostle invites us to search into no farther mysteries, than such as may be without controversy: the mystery of godliness is without controversy; and godliness is, to believe that God hath given us a law, and to live according to that law. This, this godliness, (that is, knowledge and obedience to the law) hath the promises of this life, and the next too; all referred to his law: for, without this, this godliness (which is holiness) no man shall see God: all referred to a law. This is Christ's catechism in St. John, That we might know the *only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he sent*[23]. A God commanding, and a Christ reconciling us, if we have transgressed that commandment. And this is the Holy Ghost's catechism in St. Paul, *Deus remunerator*, That we believe God to be, and to be a just rewarder of man's actions[24]: still all referred to an obedience, or disobedience of a law. The mystery of godliness is great, that is, great enough for our salvation, and yet without controversy; for, though controversies have been moved about God's first act, there can be none of his last act; though men have disputed of the object of elec-

[21] 1 Cor. i. 20. [22] 1 Tim. iii. 16.
[23] John xvii. 3. [24] Heb. xi. 6.

tion, yet of the subject of execution there is no controversy: no man can doubt, but that when God delivers over any soul actually, and by way of execution to eternal condemnation, that he delivers over that soul to that eternal condemnation, for breaking his law. In this we have no other adversary, but the over-sad, the despairing soul; and it becomes us all, to lend our hand to his succour, and to pour in our wine, and our oil, into his wounds, that lies weltering and surrounded in the blood of his own pale and exhausted soul: that soul, who though it can testify to itself, some endeavour in the ways of holiness, yet upon some collateral doubts, is still suspicious, and jealous of God. How often have we seen, that a needless jealousy and suspicion, conceived without cause, hath made a good body bad? A needless jealousy and suspicion of his purposes and intentions upon thee, may make thy merciful God angry too. Nothing can alienate God more from thee, than to think that anything but sin can alienate him. How wouldst thou have God merciful to thee, if thou wilt be unmerciful to God himself? And, *qui quid tyrannicum in Deo*[25], he that conceives any tyrannical act in God, is unjust to the God of justice, and unmerciful to the God of mercy. Therefore in the seventeenth of our Injunctions, we are commanded to arm sad souls against despair, by setting forth the mercy, and the benefits, and the godliness of Almighty God (as the word of the injunction is, the godliness of God) for, to leave God under a suspicion of dealing ill with any penitent soul, were to impute ungodliness to God. Therefore to that mistaking soul, that discomposed, that shivered, and shrivelled, and ravelled, and ruined soul, to that jealous and suspicious soul only, I say, *Let no man judge you*[26], says the apostle, intruding into those things which he hath not seen. Let no man make you afraid of secret purposes in God, which they have not, nor you have not seen; for, that by which you shall be judged, is the law; that law, which was notified, and published to you. The law alone were much too heavy, if there were not a superabundant ease and alleviation in that hand, that Christ Jesus reaches out to us. Consider the weight and the ease; and for pity to such distrustful souls, and for establishment of your own, stop your

[25] Basil. [26] Colos. ii. 16.

devotions a little, upon this consideration. There is *chirographum*, a hand-writing of ordinances against me; a debt, an obligation contracted by our first parents, in their disobedience, and fallen upon me. And even that (be it but original sin) is shrewd evidence; there is my first charge. But, *deletum est*, says the apostle there; that is blotted, that is defaced, that cannot be sued against me, after baptism: nay, *sublatum, cruci affixum*, it is cancelled, it is nailed to the cross of Christ Jesus, it is no more sin; in itself it is; but to me, to condemnation, it is not: here is my charge, and my discharge for that. But yet there is a heavier evidence, *Pactum cum inferno*, as the prophet Esay speaks, *I have made a covenant with death, and with hell I am at an agreement*[27]; that is, says St. Gregory, *Audacter, indesinenter peccamus, et diligendo, amicitiam profitemur:* We sin constantly, and we sin continually, and we sin confidently; and we find so much pleasure and profit in sin, as that we have made a league, and sworn a friendship with sin; and we keep that perverse, and irreligious promise, over-religiously; and the sins of our youth flow into other sins, when age disables us from them. But yet there is a *deletum est*, in this case too; our covenant with death is disannulled (says that prophet) when we are made partakers of the death of Christ, in the blessed sacrament. Mine actual sins lose their act, and mine habitual sins fall from me as a habit, as a garment put off, when I come to that: there is my charge, and my discharge for that. But yet there is worse evidence against me, than either this *chirographum*, the first hand-writing of Adam's hand, or than this *pactum*, this contract of mine own hand, actual and habitual sin (for of these, one is washed out in water, and the other in blood, in the two sacraments.) But then there is *Lex in membris*, says the apostle, *I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me*[28]. Sin assisted by me, is now become a tyrant over me, and hath established a government upon me; and there is a law of sin, and a law in my flesh, which after the water of baptism taken, and the water of penitent tears given; after the blood of Jesus Christ taken, and mine own blood given (that is, a holy readiness at that time, when I am made partaker of Christ's death, to die

[27] Isaiah xxviii. 15. [28] Rom. vii. 21.

for Christ) throws me back, by relapses into those repented sins. This puts the apostle to that passionate exclamation, *O wretched man that I am!* And yet he found a deliverance, even from the body of this death, through Jesus Christ his Lord: that is, a free, an open recourse and access to him in all oppressions of heart, in all dejections of spirit. Now, when this *chirographum*, this bond of Adam's hand, original sin, is cancelled upon the cross of Christ; and this *pactum*, this band of mine hand, actual sins, washed away in the blood of Christ; and this *lex in membris*, this disposition to relapse into repented sins (which, as a tide that does certainly come every day, does come every day in one form or other) is beaten back, as a tide by a bank, by a continual opposing the merits and the example of Christ Jesus, and the practice of his fasting, and such other medicinal disciplines, as I find to prevail against such relapses; when by this blessed means, the whole law, against which I am a trespasser, is evacuated, will God condemn me for all this, and not by a law? When I have pleaded Christ, and Christ, and Christ; baptism, and blood, and tears; will God condemn me an oblique way, when he cannot by a direct way; by a secret purpose, when he hath no law to condemn me by? Sad and disconsolate, distorted and distracted soul! If it be well said in the school, *Absurdum est disputare, ex manuscriptis*, It is an unjust thing in controversies and disputations, to press arguments out of manuscripts, that cannot be seen by every man; it were ill said in thy conscience, that God will proceed against thee *ex manuscripto*, or condemn thee upon anything which thou never sawest, any unrevealed purpose of his. Suspicious soul! ill-presaging soul! Is there something else, besides the day of judgment, that the Son of man does not know? Disquiet soul! Does he not know the proceeding of that judgment, wherein himself is to be the judge? But that when he hath died for thy sins, and so fulfilled the law in thy behalf, thou mayest be condemned without respect of that law, and upon something, that shall have had no consideration, no relation to any such breach of any such law in thee? Intricated, entangled conscience! Christ tells thee of a judgment, because thou didst not do the works of mercy, not feed, not clothe the poor; for those were enjoined thee by a law:

but he never tells thee of any judgment therefore, because thy name was written in a dark book of death, never unclasped, never opened unto thee in thy life. He says unto thee lovingly, and indulgently, Fear not, for it is God's good pleasure to give you the kingdom; but he never says to the wickedest in the world, Live in fear, die in anxiety, in superstition, and suspension for his displeasure: a displeasure conceived against you, before you were sinners, before you were men, hath thrown you out of that kingdom into utter darkness. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; the reason is added, because the law of the Spirit of life hath made them free from the law of sin, and of death. All, upon all sides, is still referred to law. And where there is no law against thee (as there is not to him that is in Christ; and he is in Christ, who hath endeavoured the keeping, or repented the breaking of the law) God will never proceed to execution by any secret purpose never notified, never manifested. Suspicious, jealous, scattered soul, recollect thyself, and give thyself that redintegration, that acquiescence, which the Spirit of God, in the means of the church, offers thee: study the mystery of godliness, which is without all controversy; that is, endeavour to keep, repent the not keeping of the law, and thou art safe; for that that you shall be judged by, is a law. But then this law is called here a law of liberty; and whether that denotation, that it is called a law of liberty, import an ease to us, or a heavier weight upon us, is our last disquisition, and conclusion of all: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

That the apostle here, by the law of liberty, means the Gospel, was never doubted. He had called the Gospel so, before this place: *Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, shall be blessed in his deed*[29]; that is, blessed in doing so, blessed in conforming himself to the Gospel. But why does he call it so, a law of liberty? Not because men naturally affecting liberty, might be drawn to an affection of the Gospel, by proposing it in that specious name of liberty, though it were not so. The Holy Ghost calls the Gospel a pearl, and a treasure, and a kingdom, and joy, and glory; not to allure men with false names,

[29] James i. 25.

but because men love these, and the Gospel is truly all these; a pearl, and a treasure, and a kingdom, and joy, and glory: and it is truly a law of liberty. But of what kind, and in what respect? Not such a liberty as they have established in the Roman church, where ecclesiastical liberty must exempt ecclesiastical persons from participating all burdens of the state, and from being traitors, though they commit treason, because they are subjects to no secular prince: nor the liberty of the Anabaptists, that overthrows magistracy, and consequently all subjection, both ecclesiastical and laic; for, when upon those words, *Be ye not servants of men*[30], St. Chrysostom says, This is Christian liberty, *Nec aliis nec sibi servire*, neither to be subjects to others, nor to ourselves; that is spoken with modification, with relation to our first allegiance, our allegiance to God; not to be so subject to others, or to ourselves, as that either for their sakes or our own, we depart from any necessary declaration of our service to God.

First then, the Gospel is a law of liberty, in respect of the Author of the Gospel, of God himself, because it leaves God at his liberty. Not at liberty to judge against his Gospel, where he hath manifested it for a law; for he hath laid a holy necessity upon himself, to judge according to that law, where he hath published that law. But at liberty so, as that it consists only in his good pleasure, to what nation he will publish the Gospel, or in what nation he will continue the Gospel, or upon what persons he will make this Gospel effectual. So Œcumenius (who is no single witness, nor speaks not alone, but compiles the former fathers) places this liberty in God, that God is at liberty to give this Gospel when he will; and at liberty so, as that he hath exempted no man, how well soever he love him; nor put on such fetters or manacles upon himself, but that he can and will punish those that transgress this law. So it is a law of liberty to God; nothing determined upon any man, nothing concluded in himself, lies so in God's way, as to hinder him from proceeding in his last judgment, according to the keeping or breaking of this law: still God is at his liberty. And it is a law of liberty in respect of us: of us, who are Christians; and considered so, either with a

[30] 1 Cor. vii. 23.

respect to the natural man, or with a respect to the Jew. For, if we compare the Christian with the natural man, the law of nature lays the same obligation upon the natural man, as the Gospel does upon the Christian, for the moral part thereof. The Christian is no more bound to love God, nor his neighbour, than the natural man is: therein the natural man hath no more liberty than the Christian; so far their law is equal: and then all the law which the Christian hath, and the natural man hath not, is a law of liberty to the Christian, that is, a law that gives him an ease, and a readier way to perform those duties; which way the natural man hath not, and yet is bound to the same duties. The natural man, if he transgress that law, which he finds in his own heart, finds a condemnation in himself, as well as the Christian; therein he is no freer than the Christian: but he finds no sanctuary, no altar, no sacrifice, no church; no such liberties, as the Christian does in the Gospel. So the Gospel is a law of liberty to us in respect of the natural man, that it sets us at liberty, restores us to liberty, after we are fallen into prison for debt, into God's displeasure for sin, by affording us means of reconciliation to God again.

It is so also in respect of the law given by God to the Jews. The Jews had liberties, that is, refuge and help of sacrifices for sin; which the natural man had not: for, if the natural man were driven and followed from his own heart, that he saw no comfort of an innocency there, he had no other liberties to fly to, no comfort in any other thing; no law, no promise annexed to any other action; not to sacrifice, as the Jews; or to sacrament, as the Christians, but must irremediably sink under the condemnation of his own heart. The Jew had this liberty, a law, and a law that involved the Gospel; but then the Gospel was to the Jew but as a letter sealed; and the Jew was but as a servant, who was trusted to carry the letter, as it was, sealed, to another, to carry it to the Christian. Now the Christian hath received this letter at the Jew's hand, and he opens it; he sees the Jews' prophecy made history to him; the Jews' hope and reversion, made possession and inheritance to him: he sees the Jews' faith made matter of fact; he sees all that was promised and represented in the law, performed and recorded in the Gospel, and

applied in the church. There Christ says, *Henceforth call I you not servants, but friends*[31]. Wherein consists this enfranchisement? In this; *The servant knoweth not what his master doth* (the Jews knew not that) *but I have called you friends*, says Christ, *for all things that I heard of my Father, I have made known unto you. The law made nothing perfect*, says the apostle[32]. Where was the defect? He tells us that; the old covenant (that is, the law) gendereth to bondage. What bondage? He tells us that too, when he says, *The law was a schoolmaster*[33]. The Jews were as schoolboys, always spelling, and putting together types and figures; which things typified and figured, how this lamb should signify Christ, how this fire should signify a Holy Ghost. The Christian is come to the university, from grammar to logic, to him that is *Logos* itself, the Word; to apprehend and apply Christ himself; and so is at more liberty than when he had only a dark law, without any comment, with the natural man; or only a dark comment, that is, the law, with a dim light, and ill eyes, as the Jews had: for though the Jew had the liberty of a law, yet they had not the law of liberty. So the Gospel is a law of liberty to God, who is still at his liberty to give and take, and to condemn according to that law; and a law of liberty to us, as we are compared to the natural man, or to the Jew. But when we confine ourselves in ourselves, positively, without comparison, it is not such a law of liberty to us, as some men have come too near saying, That the sins of God's children do them no harm; that God sees not the sins of his children; that God was no further out with David in his adultery, than in his repentance: but, as to be born within the covenant, that is, of Christian parents, does not make us Christians, (for, *Non nascitur, sed renascitur Christianus*[34]) the covenant gives us a title to the sacrament of baptism, and that sacrament makes us Christians: so this law of liberty gives us not a liberty to sin, but a liberty from sin. *Noli libertate abuti, ad libere peccandum*, says the same father; It is not a liberty, but an impotency, a slavery, to sin. *Voluntas libera quæ pia*, says he, Only a holy soul is a free soul. *Where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty*, says

[31] John xv. 15.
[32] Heb. vii. 19.
[33] Gal. iv. 24.
[34] Augustine.

the apostle[35]: and *Splendidissimum in se quisque habet speculum*[36], Every man hath a glass, a crystal, into which, though he cannot call up this spirit (for the Spirit of God breathes where it pleases him) yet he can see this spirit, if he be there, in that glass: every man hath a glass in himself, where he may see himself, and the image of God, says that father, and see how like he is to that. To dare to reflect upon myself, and to search all the corners of mine own conscience, whether I have rightly used this law of liberty; and neither been bold before a sin, upon presumption of an easy; nor diffident after, upon suspicion of an impossible reconciliation to my God: this is evangelical liberty.

So then (to end all) though it be a law of liberty, because it gives us better means of prevention before, and of restitution after, than the natural man, or the Jew had; yet we consider, that it is this law of liberty, this law that hath afforded us these good helps, by which we shall be judged; and so, though our case be better than theirs, because we have this law of liberty, which they wanted, yet our case grows heavier than theirs, if we use it not aright. The Jews shall be under a heavier condemnation than the natural man, because they had more liberty, that is, more means of avoiding sin, than the natural man had; and, upon the same reason, the Christian under a heavier condemnation than either, because he shall be judged by this law of liberty.

What judgment then gives this law? This; *Qui non crediderit, damnabitur;* and so says this law in the law-maker's mouth, *He that believes not, shall be damned*[37]. And as no less light than faith itself, can show you what faith is, what it is to believe; so no less time than damnation shall last, can show you what damnation is: for the very form of damnation is the everlastingness of it; and, *Qui non crediderit, He that believeth not shall be damned:* there is no commutation of penance, nor beheading after a sentence of a more ignominious death, in that court. Dost thou believe that thou dost believe? Yet this law takes not that answer: this law of liberty takes the liberty to look farther; *through faith into works;* for, so says the law in the mouth of the Law-maker; *To whom much is given, of him much*

[35] 2 Cor. iii. 17. [36] Leo. [37] Mark xvi. 16.

shall be required[88]. Hast thou considered every new title of honour, and every new addition of office, every new step into higher places, to have laid new duties, and new obligations upon thee? Hast thou doubled the hours of thy prayers, when thy preferments are doubled; and increased thine alms, according as thy revenues are increased? Hast thou done something, done much in this kind? This law will not be answered so; this law of liberty takes the liberty to call upon thee for all. Here also the law says in the mouth of the Law-maker, *If thou have agreed with many adversaries*, says Christ, (let that be, if thou have satisfied many duties) (for duties are adversaries, that is, temptations upon us) *yet, as long as thou hast one adversary, agree with that adversary quickly in the way*[89]; leave no duty undischarged, or unrepented in this life. Beloved, we have well delivered ourselves of the fear of purgatory; none of us fear that: but another mistaking hath overtaken us, and we flatter ourselves with another danger, that is, compensation, that by doing well in one place, our ill-doing in another is recompensed: an ill officer looks to be saved, because he is a good husband to his wife, a good father to his children, a good master to his servants; and he thinks he hath three to one for his salvation. But, as nature requires the qualities of every element which thou art composed of; so this law of liberty calls upon thee for the exercise of all those virtues, that appertain to every particular place thou holdest: this liberty, this law of liberty takes; it binds thee to believe Christ, all Christ; God's Christ, as he was the eternal Son of the Father, God of God; our Christ, as he was made man for our salvation; and thy Christ, as his blessed Spirit, in this his ordinance, applies him to thee, and offers him into thine arms this minute. And then, to know, that he looks for a retribution from thee, in that measure, in which he hath dealt with thee; much for much; and for several kinds of good, according to those several good things, which he hath done for thee. And, if thou be first defective in these, and then defective in laying hold upon him, who is the propitiation and satisfaction for thy defects in these, this law of liberty returns to her liberty to pronounce, and the Judge to his liberty to execute that sentence, *damnaberis*,

[88] Luke xii. 48. [89] Matt. v. 25.

thou wilt be cast into that prison, where thou must pay the last farthing; thou must; for Christ dies not there, and therefore there they must lie, till there come such another ransom as Christ; nay, a greater ransom than Christ was, for Christ paid no debts in that prison. This then is the Christian's case, and this is the abridgment of his religion; *Sic loquimini, sic facite;* to speak aright, and to do aright; to profess the truth, and not be afraid nor ashamed of that; and to live according to that profession: for, no man can make God the author of sin; but that man comes as near it as he can, that makes God's religion a cloak for his sin. To this God proceeds not merely and only by commandment, but by persuasion too; and, though he be not bound to do so, yet he does give a reason. The reason is, because he must give account of both; both of actions, and of words; of both we shall be judged, but judged by a law; a law which excludes, on God's part, any secret ill purpose upon us, if we keep his law; a law which excludes, on our part, all pretence of ignorance; for no man can plead ignorance of a law. And then, a law of liberty; of liberty to God: for God was not bound to save a man, because he made him; but of his own goodness, he vouchsafed him a law, by which he may be saved; a law of liberty to us: so that there is no epicurism, to do what we list; no such liberty as makes us libertines; for then there were no law; nor Stoicism, nor fatality, that constrains us to do that we would not do, for then there were no liberty. But the Gospel is such a law of liberty, as delivers us, upon whom it works, from the necessity of falling into the bondage of sin before, and from the impossibility of recovering after, if we be fallen into that bondage. And this is liberty enough; and of this liberty, our blessed God give us the right use, for his Son Christ Jesus' sake, by the operation of that Holy Ghost, that proceeds from both. Amen.

SERMON CXXXV.

A LENT SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE KING, AT WHITEHALL, FEBRUARY 16, 1620.

1 Timothy iii. 16.

And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

This is no text for an hour-glass: if God would afford me Hezekiah's sign, *Ut revertatur umbra*[1], that the shadow might go backward upon the dial; or Joshua's sign, *Ut sistat sol*[2], that the sun might stand still all the day, this were text enough to employ all the day, and all the days of our life. The Lent, which we begin now, is a full tithe of the year; but the hour which we begin now, is not a full tithe of this day, and therefore we should not grudge all that: but payment of tithes is grown matter of controversy; and we, by our text, are directed only upon matter without controversy: *And without controversy*, &c.

Here is the compass, that the essential Word of God, the Son of God Christ Jesus, went: he was God, humbled in the flesh; he was Man, received into glory. Here is the compass that the written Word of God, went, the Bible; that begun in Moses, in darkness, in the chaos; and it ends in St. John, in clearness, in a revelation. Here is the compass of all time, as time was distributed in the creation, *Vespere et mane;* Darkness, and then light: the evening and morning made the day; mystery and manifestation made the text.

The doctrine of the present season, is mortification, humiliation; and the experience of the present place, where we stand now in court, is, that the glory of the persons, in whose presence we stand, occasions humility in us; the more glorious they are, the humbler we are; and therefore to consider Christ, as he is received into glory, is as much the way of our humiliation and mortification, as to consider him in his passion, in his exinanition; at least, how small account should we make of those things

[1] 2 Kings xx. 9. [2] Josh. x. 11.

which we suffer for Christ in this world, when we see in this text, that in the describing the history of Christ from his incarnation to his ascension, the Holy Ghost pretermits, never mentions, never seems to consider the passion of Christ; as though all that he had suffered for man, were nothing in respect of that he would suffer, if the justice of God had required any heavier satisfaction. The text then is a sufficient instruction to Timothy, to whom this epistle is sent, and to us, to whom it is sent too, that thereby we might know how to behave ourselves in the house of God, which is the church of God, the pillar and ground of truth; as is said in the verse immediately before the text, to which the text hath relation: we know how to behave ourselves in the church, if we know in the text that such a mystery of godliness there is, and know what it is. Our parts, therefore, are but two; mystery and manifestation. In the first, the apostle proceeds thus: first, he recommends to us such doctrine as is without controversy: and truly there is enough of that to save any soul, that hath not a mind to wrangle itself into hell. And then he says, that this godliness, though it be without controversy, yet it is a mystery, a secret; not present, not obvious, not discernible with every eye: it is a mystery, and a great mystery; not the greatest, but yet great, that is, great enough; he that knows that, needs no more. And then, for the second part, which is the manifestation of the mystery, we shall look upon that by all those beams, which shine out in this text, *ab ortu ad meridiem*, from Christ's east to his noon, from his first manifesting in the flesh, to his receiving into glory.

First then, he proposes doctrine without controversy: for, *Quod simpliciter predicatur, credendum; quod subtilitur disputatur, intelligendum est*[a]. That which Christ hath plainly delivered, is the exercise of my faith; that which other men have curiously disputed, is the exercise of my understanding: if I understand not their curious disputations, perchance I shall not be esteemed in this world; but if I believe not Christ's plain doctrine, I am sure I shall not be saved in the next. It is true, that Christ reprehends them often, *Quia non intellexerunt*, but what? *Scripturas, legem:* because they understood not the

[a] Augustine.

Scriptures, which they were bound to believe. It is some negligence not to read a proclamation from the king; it is a contempt, to transgress it; but to deny the power from which it is derived, is treason. Not to labour to understand the Scriptures, is to slight God; but not to believe them, is to give God the lie: he makes God a liar, if he believe not the record that God gave of his Son[4]. When I come to heaven, I shall not need to ask of St. John's angel, nor of his elders, *Ubi prophetæ, ubi apostoli, ubi evangelistæ?* Where are the prophets, where are the evangelists, where are the apostles? for, I am sure I shall see them there: but perchance I may be put to ask St. Paul's question, *Ubi scribæ? ubi sapientes*[5]*?* Where are the scribes, where are the wise men, where are the disputers of the world? perchance I may miss a great many of them there. It is the text that saves us; the interlineary glosses, and the marginal notes, and the *variæ lectiones*, controversies and perplexities, undo us: the will, the testament of God, enriches us; the schedules, the codicils of men, beggar us: because the serpent was subtiler than any[6], he would dispute and comment upon God's law, and so deceived by his subtilty[7]. The word of God is *biblia*, it is not *bibliotheca;* a a book, a bible, not a library. And all that book is not written in Balthazar's character, in a *mene, tekel, upharsin*, that we must call in astrologers, and Chaldeans, and soothsayers, to interpret it. That which was written so, as that it could not be understood, was written, says the text there, with the fingers of man's hand; it is the hand of man that induces obscurities; the hand of God hath written so, as man may run, and read; walk in the duties of his calling here, and attend the salvation of his soul too. He that believes Christ, and Mahomet, indifferently, hath not proposed the right end: he that believes the word of God, and traditions, indifferently, hath not proposed the right way. In any conveyance, if anything be interlined, the interlining must be as well testified, and have the same witnesses upon the endorsment, as the conveyance itself had. When there are traditions in the church (as declaratory traditions there are) they must have the same witnesses, they must be grounded upon the word of

[4] 1 John v. 10.
[5] 1 Cor. i. 20.
[6] Gen. iii. 1.
[7] 2 Cor. ii. 3.

God: for there only is truth without controversy. Pilate asked Christ, *Quid veritas?* What was truth[8]? and he might have known, if he would have stayed; but, *Exivit*, says the text there, He went out, out to the Jews; and there he could not find it, there he never thought of it more. Ask of Christ speaking in his word, there you shall know; produce the record, the Scripture, and there is *communis salus;* I wrote unto you of the common salvation[9]: What is that? *Semel tradita fides*, says that apostle there: The faith which was once delivered to the saints: where *semel* is not *aliquando;* once, is not once upon a time, I cannot tell when; but *semel* is *simul*, once is at once: the Gospel was delivered altogether, and not by postscripts. Thus it is, if we go to the record, to the Scripture: and thus it is, if we ask a judge (I do not say, the judge, but a judge) for, the fathers are a judge; a judge is a judge, though there lie an appeal from him. And will not the fathers say so too? *Quod ubique, quod semper;* that is common salvation, which hath bound the communion of saints; that which all churches always have thought and taught to be necessary to salvation. Ask the record, ask that judge, and it will be so; and it will be so, if you ask the counsel on the other side. Ask the council of Trent itself, and the idolaters of that council will not say, that our church affirms any error; neither can they say, that we leave any truth unaffirmed, which the primitive church affirmed to be necessary to salvation. For those things which the School hath drawn into disputation since, as their form is, in the beginning of every question, to say, *Videtur quod non*, one would think it were otherwise; if when they have said all, I return to the beginning again, *Videtur quod non*, I think it is otherwise still. Must I be damned? The evidence for my salvation is my *credo*, not their *probo;* and if I must get heaven by a syllogism, my major is *Credo in Deum Patrem*, I believe in God the Father; for *Pater major*, the Father is greater than all[10]: and my minor shall be, *Credo in Deum Filium*, I believe in God the Son, *Qui exivit de patre*, He came from God; and my conclusion, which must proceed from *major et minor*, shall be *Credo in Spiritum Sanctum*, I believe in

[8] John xviii. 38. [9] Jude 3. [10] John x. 29.

the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from Father and Son: and this syllogism brought me into the Militant church in my baptism, and this will carry me into the Triumphant, in my transmigration; for doctrine of salvation is matter without controversy.

But yet, as clear as it is, it is a mystery, a secret; not that I cannot see it, but that I cannot see it with any eyes that I can bring: not with the eye of nature: *Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee*, says Christ to Peter[11]: not with the eye of learning; *Thou hast hid these things from the wise*, says Christ to his Father: not with the eye of state, that wheresoever I see a good government, I should presume a good religion; for, we do not admit the church of Rome, and yet we do admire the court of Rome; nor with the eye of a private sense; for no prophecy of Scripture; for, *quod non nisi instinctu Dei scitur, prophetia est;* that which I cannot understand by reason, but by especial assistance from God, all that is prophecy. No Scripture is of private interpretation[12]. I see not this mystery by the eye of nature, of learning, of state, of mine own private sense; but I see it by the eye of the church, by the light of faith, that is true; but yet organically, instrumentally, by the eye of the church. And this church is that which proposes to me all that is necessary to my salvation, in the Word, and seals all to me in the sacraments. If another man see, or think he sees more than I; if by the help of his optic-glasses, or perchance but by his imagination, he sees a star or two more in any constellation than I do; yet that star becomes none of the constellation; it adds no limb, no member to the constellation, that was perfect before: so, if other men see that some additional and traditional things may add to the dignity of the church, let them say it conduces to the well-being, not to the very being; to the existence, not to the essence of the church; for that is only things necessary to salvation. And this mystery is, faith in a pure conscience[13]: for that is the same thing that is called godliness in this text: and it is to profess the Gospel of Christ Jesus sincerely, and entirely; to have a conscience testifying to himself, that he hath contributed nothing to the diminution of it, that he labours to live by it, that he hopes to die

[11] Matt. xvi. 16. [12] 2 Pet. i. 20. [13] 1 Tim. iii. 9.

in it, that he fears not to die for it. This is *Mysterium, opertum, et apertum*, hid from those that are lost[14], but manifested to his saints[15]: it is a mystery, and a great mystery; that is next: not that there is not a greater; for the mystery of iniquity is greater than the mystery of godliness: compare creeds to creeds, and the new creed of the Trent Council, is greater by many articles than the apostles' creed is. Compare oaths to oaths; and Berengarian's old oath in the Roman church, that he must swear to the *frangitur et teritur*, that he broke the flesh of Christ with his teeth, and ground it with his jaws; and the new oath of the Council of Trent, that he must swear that all those subtle school-points, determined there, in which a man might have believed the contrary a few days before, and yet have been a good Roman Catholic too, are true, and true *de fide;* so true, as that he cannot be saved now, except he believe them to be so: the Berengarian's oath, and the Trent oath, have much more difficulty in them, than to swear, that King James is lawful king in all his dominions, and therefore exempt from all foreign jurisdiction over him. There is a mystery of iniquity, declared in a creed of iniquity, and in an oath of iniquity, greater than the mystery of godliness: but yet this is great, that is, great enough; he needs no more, that hath this, faith with a pure conscience: he need not go up to heaven[16] for more, not to a vice-god, to an infallible bishop of Rome; He need not go over sea for more, says Moses there; not to the hills, beyond sea, nor to the lake beyond sea: for God hath given him his station in a church, where this mystery is sufficiently declared and explicated. The mystery of iniquity may be great, for it hath wrought a great while[17]. *Jam operatur*, says the apostle in his time; The mystery of iniquity doth already work, and it is likely to work still: it is but a little while since we saw it work under ground, in the vault. But if (as hath been lately, royally, and religiously intimated to us all) their insolency have so far infatuated them, as to think themselves at an end of their work, and promise themselves a holiday, our assurance is in this, *Pater operatur adhuc, et ego operor*, says Christ[18]; My Father works yet, and I work: and if amongst us

[14] 2 Cor. iv. 3. [15] Col. i. 26. [16] Deut. xxx. 12.
[17] 2 Thess. ii. 7. [18] John v. 17.

the Father work, and the Son work; for all the vain hopes of some, and the vain fears of others, the mystery of godliness will stand and grow.

Now, how far this mystery, this great mystery, this mystery without controversy is revealed in this text, we are to look by the several beams thereof; of which, the first is, *manifestatus in carne, God was manifested in the flesh. Cœli enarrant*, says David, *The heavens declare the glory of God*[19]; and that should be the harmony of the spheres. *Invisibilia conspiciuntur*, says St. Paul, *Invisible things of God are seen in the visible*[20]; and that should be the prospect of this world. The knowledge of God was manifested often in the prophets; he foretold, therefore he foresaw. His wisdom was manifested often, in frustrating all councils of all Achitophels against him. And his power was manifested often: in the water; consider it at least in the Red Sea, and in Pharaoh, if you will bring it no nearer home; and in the fire, consider it at least in the fiery furnace, if you will bring it no nearer home. His knowledge, his wisdom, his power, his mercy, his justice, all his attributes are always manifested in all his works. But, *Deus in carne*, that the person of God, God himself, should be manifested, and manifested in our flesh, *Ineffabile omni sermoni, omni ignotum intelligentiæ, ipse angelorum primati non agnitum*[21]. And if the primate of the angels, the highest order of them that stand in God's sight, know it not; if no understanding were able to conceive it, that had all the refinings and concoction, that study, and speculation, and zeal to be *vir desideriorum* (as the angel said to Daniel) a man that desired to dwell upon the meditation of his God, could give; must not I, who always come with Moses' uncircumcised lips, not to speak persuasively; and always with Jeremy's defect, *Puer sum, nescio loqui*, Not to speak plainly; come now with Zachary's dumbness, not to speak at all in this mystery? But hearkening to that which he who only knew this mystery, hath said, *Verbum caro factum est, The Word was made flesh;* and *Deus manifestatus in carne, God was manifested in the flesh;* rest myself in his Word, and pray you in Christ's stead to do so too, in this, and all mysteries of your religion, to rest upon

[19] Psalm xix. 2. [20] Rom. i. 20. [21] Areopagita.

the only Word of God: for in this particular, it is not misgrounded, nor mis-collected by him that says, *Omnes pene errores*, Almost all errors have proceeded out of this, that this great mystery, that *God was manifested in the flesh*, *Aut non omnino, aut non sicuti est creditum*[22]; is either not all, or not aright believed. The Jews believe not at all; and to them Tertullian says enough: Since out of their prophets they confess, that when the Messias shall be manifested, they must for a time suffer many calamities in this world; If their Messias should be manifested now (says he) what could they suffer? They say they must suffer banishment; *Et ubi dispersio gentis, quæ jam extorris;* Whither shall that nation be banished, which is already in banishment and dispersion? *Redde statum Judæis*, let the Jews show me a state, a kingdom, a commonwealth, a government, magistrates, judicatures, merchandise, and armies; let them show something to lose for a Messias, and then let them look for a Messias. The Jews are within the *non omnino*, they believe not this mystery at all: and then, for the *non sicut est*, for the not believing it aright, as the old Valentinians are renewed in the Anabaptists (for both deny that Christ took flesh of the Virgin) so the old Manichæans are not renewed, but exceeded in the Transubstantiators: for they said the body of Christ was left in one place, in the sun; these say, It is upon as many tables, and in as many boxes as they will. But whether the manifestation of God in the flesh were referred to the incarnation of Christ; or to his declaration, when the wise men of the East came to see him at Bethlehem; whether when it was done, or when it was declared to be done, hath admitted a question, because the Western church hath called that day of their coming to him, the Epiphany; and epiphany is manifestation. Then therefore is God manifested to us, when, as these wise men offered their myrrh and frankincense, we offer the sacrifice of prayer; and as they offered their gold, we offer our temporal wealth for the glory of Christ Jesus: and when the love of him corrects in thee the intemperances of adorning thy flesh, of pampering thy flesh, of obeying thy flesh, then especially is this epiphany, God is manifested in the flesh, in thy flesh.

[22] Fulgentius.

Now, when he was manifested in the flesh, it behoved him to be justified in the Spirit; for he came in *similitudinem carnis peccati*[23]: they took him for a sinner, and they saw him converse with sinners: for anything they could see, it might have been *caro peccati*, sinful flesh; and they saw enough to make them sure that it was *caro mortis*, mortal flesh. Though he were *panis de cœlo*, bread from heaven, yet himself was hungry; and though he were *fons perennis*, an everlasting spring, yet himself was thirsty; though he were *Deus totius consolationis*, the God of all comfort[24], yet his soul was heavy unto death; and though he were *Dominus vitæ*, the Lord of life, yet death had dominion over him. When therefore Christ was manifested in the flesh, flesh subject to death, death, which was the reward of sin; and would take upon him to forgive sins; it behoved him to be extraordinarily justified, extraordinarily declared to the world: and so he was; he was justified *in Spiritu*, in the Spirit; first, *in Spiritu Sancto*, in the Spirit, in the Holy Ghost; both when the Holy Ghost was sent to him, and when the Holy Ghost was sent by him, from him. The Holy Ghost was sent to him in his baptism, and he tarried upon him: Christ was not, a Christian is not justified by one access, one visitation, one approach of the Holy Ghost; not by one religious act: it is a permanency, a perseverance that justifies: that foolishness, and that fascination (as the apostle calls it) that witchcraft which he imputes to the Galatians, is not so worn out, but that there are foolish and bewitched Galatians still, that begun in the spirit, and will be made perfect in the flesh; that received their Christianity in one church, and attend a confirmation, a better state, in a worse. Christ was justified by the Holy Ghost, when the Holy Ghost came to him: so he was, when he came from him, at Pentecost, upon his apostles; and then he came in tongues, and fiery tongues. Christ was not, a Christian is not justified in silence, but in declarations and open professions; in tongues: and not in dark and ambiguous speeches, not infinite and retractable speeches, but in fiery tongues; fiery, that is, fervent; fiery, that is, clear. He was justified so, *a Spiritu Sancto;* and so he was, *a Spiritu suo*, by his own Spirit: not only in that protestation of his, *Who can accuse me of any*

[23] Rom. viii. 3. [24] 2 Cor. i. 3.

sin? for St. Paul could say that he was unreproachable in the sight of men, and yet he could not choose but say, *Quorum ego maximus;* that he was the greatest sinner of all men. I were a miserable man, if I could accuse Christ of no sin; if I could not prove all my sins his, I were under a heavy condemnation. But that which we intend by his being justified, *a Spiritu suo*, by his own Spirit, is, not by the testimony that he gave of himself; but by that Spirit, that Godhead, that dwelt bodily in him, and declared him, and justified him in that high power and practice of miracles. When Christ came into this world, as if he had come a day before any day, a day before Moses' *in principio*, before there was any creature (for when Christ came, there was creatures that could exercise any natural faculty in opposition to his purposes) when nature his vicegerent gave up her sword to his hands; when the sea shut up herself like marble, and bore him; and the earth opened herself like a book, to deliver out her dead, to wait upon him; when the winds, in the midst of their own roaring, could hear his voice; and death itself, in putrid and corrupt carcases, could hear his voice; and when his own body, whom his own soul had left and abandoned, was not abandoned by this Spirit, by this Godhead (for the Deity departed not from the dead body of Christ) then was Christ especially justified by this Spirit, in whose power he raised himself from the dead; he was justified in *Spiritu Sancto*, and *in spiritu suo;* two witnesses were enough for him. Add a third for thyself, *et justificetur in spiritu tuo*, let him be justified in thy spirit: God is safe enough in himself, and yet it was a good declaratory addition, that the Publicans justified God: Wisdom is safe enough of herself, and yet Wisdom is justified of her children[25]: Christ is sufficiently justified; but *justificetur in spiritu tuo*, in thy spirit. To say, If I consider the Talmud, Christ may as well be the Messias, as any whom the Jews place their marks upon; if I consider the Alchoran, Christ is like enough to be a better prophet than Mahomet; if I consider the arguments of the Arians, Christ may be the Son of God for all that; if I consider the church of Rome, and ours, he is as likely to manifest himself in his own Word here, as there in their word; to say but so, Christ may be

[25] Luke vii. 29. Matt. ii. 19.

God for anything I know: this is but to bail him, not to justify him; not to quit him, but to put him over to the sessions, to the great sessions, where he shall justify himself; but none of them, who do not justify him, testify for him, *in spiritu suo*, sincerely in their souls: nay, that is not enough: to justify is an act of declaration; and no man knows what is in man, but the spirit of man[26]: and therefore he that leaves any outward thing undone, that belongs to his calling, for Christ, is so far from having justified Christ, as that at the last day, he shall meet his voice with them that cried, Crucify him, and with theirs that cried, *Not Christ, but Barabbas;* if thou doubt in thy heart, if thou disguise in thine actions, *non justificatur in spiritu tuo*, Christ is not justified in thy spirit; and that is it which concerns thee most.

Christ had all this testimony more, *Visus ab angelis*, He was seen of angels: which is, not only visited by angels, served by angels; waited upon by angels: so he was, and he was so in every passage, in every step. An angel told his mother, that he should be born: and an angel told the shepherd, that he was born; and that which directed the wise men of the East where to find him, when he was born, is also believed by some of the ancients, to have been an angel in the likeness of a star. When he was tempted by the devil, angels came and ministered to him[27], but the devil had left him before; his own power, had dissipated his. In his agony in the garden, an angel came from heaven to strengthen him[28]; but he had recovered before, and was come to his *veruntamen*, *Not my will, but thine be done.* He told Peter, he could have more than twelve legions of angels to assist him[29]; but he would not have the assistance of his own sword: he denies not that which the devil says, that the angels had in charge, *that he should not dash his foot against a stone*[30]; but they had an easy service of it; for his foot never dashed, never stumbled, never tripped in any way. As soon as any stone lay in his way, an angel removed it: *He rolled away the stone from the sepulchre*[31]. There the angel testified to the women that sought him, not only that he was not there, (that was a poor

[26] 1 Cor. ii. 2. [27] Matt. iv. 11. [28] Luke xxii. 43.
[29] Matt. xxvi. 53. [30] Matt. iv. 6. [31] Matt. xxviii. 2.

comfort) but where he was: He is gone into Galilee, and there you shall find him. There also the angel testified to the men of Galilee, that looked after him, not only that he was gone up (that was but a poor comfort) but that he should come again. *The same Jesus shall so come as he went*[32]. There in heaven, they perform that service, whilst he stays there, which they are called upon to do: *Let all the angels of God worship him*[33]; and in judgment, *when the Son of man shall come in his glory, all the holy angels shall be with him;* in every point of that great compass, in every arch, in every section of that great circle, of which no man knows the diameter, how long it shall be from Christ's first coming to his second, *visus ab angelis*, he was seen, he was visited, he was waited upon by the angels. But there is more intended in this, than so.

Christ was seen of the angels, otherwise now, than ever before: something was revealed to the angels themselves concerning Christ, which they knew not before; at least, not so as they knew it now. For, all the angels do not always know all things: if they had, there would have been no dissension, no strife, no difference between the two angels; the angel of Persia would not have withstood the other angel twenty-one days[34]; neither would have resisted God's purpose, if both had known it; St. Dionyse, who considers the names, and natures, and places, and apprehensions of angels, most of any, observes of the highest orders of angels, *Ordines supremi ad Jesu aspectum hæsitabant;* The highest of the highest orders of angels, were amazed at Christ's coming up in the flesh; it was a new and unexpected thing to see Christ come thither, in that manner. There they say with amazement, *Quis iste? Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah*[35]? And Christ answers there, *Ego, It is I, I that speak in righteousness, I that am mighty to save.* The angels reply, *Wherefore are thy garments red like him that treadeth the wine-press?* And Christ gives them satisfaction, *Calcavi;* You mistake not the matter, *I have trodden the wine-press;* and *Calcavi solus, I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me.* The angels then knew

[32] Acts i. 2. [33] Heb. i. 6.
[34] Dan. x. 21. [35] Isaiah LXIII. 1.

not this, not all this, not all the particulars of this, the mystery of Christ's incarnation for the redemption of man: the angels knew it in general; for, it was *commune quoddam principium;* it was the general mark, to which all their service, as they were ministering spirits, was directed. But for particulars, as amongst the prophets, some of the later understood more than the former (*I understand more than the ancients*, says David[36]) and the apostles understood more than the prophets, even of those things which they had prophesied, (this mystery in other ages was not made known, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles[37];) so the angels are come to know some things of Christ, since Christ came, in another manner than before. And this may be that which St. Paul intends, when he says, that he was made a minister of the Gospel, *To the intent, that now, unto principalities and powers, in heavenly places, might be known by the church, the manifold wisdom of God*[38]. And St. Peter also, speaking of the administration of the church, expresses it so, *That the angels desire to look into it*[39]. Which is not only that which St. Augustine says, *Innotuit a seculis per ecclesiam angelis*, That the angels saw the mystery of the Christian religion, from before all beginnings, and that by the church, *Quia ipsa ecclesia illis, in Deo apparuit;* Because they saw in God the future church, from before all beginnings; but even in the propagation and administration of the church, they see many things now, which distinctly, effectually, experimentally, as they do now, they could not see before. And so, to this purpose, *visus in nobis*, Christ is seen by the angels, in us and our conversation now. *Spectaculum sumus*, says the apostle[40]; *We are made a spectacle to men and angels.* The word is there *theatrum*, and so St. Hierome reads it: and therefore let us be careful to play those parts well, which even the angels desire to see well acted. Let him that finds himself to be the honester man by thinking so, think in the name of God, that he hath a particular tutelar angel, that will do him no harm to think so: and let him that thinks not so, yet think, that so far as conduces to the support of God's children, and to the joy of the angels themselves, and to the glory of God; the

[36] Psalm cxix. 100. [37] Eph. iii. 6. [38] Eph. iii. 10.
[39] 1 Pet. i. 12. [40] 1 Cor. iv. 9.

angels do see men's particular actions: and then, if thou wouldst not solicit a woman's chastity, if her servant were by to testify it; nor calumniate an absent person in the king's ear, if his friends were by to testify it; if thou canst slumber in thyself, that main consideration, that the eye of God is always open, and always upon thee; yet have a little religious civility, and holy respect, even to those angels that see thee: that those angels which see Christ Jesus now, sat down in glory at the right hand of his Father; all sweat wiped from his brows, and all tears from his eyes; all his stripes healed, all his blood stanched, all his wounds shut up, and all his beauty returned there; when they look down hither, to see the same Christ in thee, may not see him scourged again, wounded, torn and mangled again, in thy blasphemings, nor crucified again in thy irreligious conversation: *visus ab angelis*, he was seen of the angels, in himself, whilst he was here: and he is seen in his saints upon earth, by angels now; and shall be so to the end of the world: which saints he hath gathered from the Gentiles: which is the next branch; *predicatus Gentibus*, he was preached to the Gentiles.

Mercy and truth meet together, says David[41]: everywhere in God's proceedings; they meet together; but nowhere closer, than in calling the Gentiles. Jesus Christ was made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God[42]: Wherein consisted that truth? To confirm the promises made unto the fathers, says the apostle there, and that is to the Jews: but was Christ a minister of the circumcision only for that, only for the truth? No: *Truth and mercy meet together*, as it follows there; and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. The Jews were a holy nation; that was their addition; *gens sancta;* but the addition of the Gentiles, was *peccatores*, sinners: We are Jews by nature, and not of the Gentiles, sinners, says St. Paul[43]: *He that touched the Jews, touched the apple of God's eye;* and for their sakes, God rebuked kings, and said, *Touch not mine anointed:* but upon the Gentiles, not only dereliction, but indignation, and consternation, and devastation, and extermination, everywhere interminated, inflicted everywhere, and everywhere

[41] Psalm LXXXV. 10. [42] Rom. xv. 8. [43] Gal. ii. 15.

multiplied: the Jews had all kind of assurance and ties upon God; both law, and custom; they both prescribed in God, and God had bound himself to them by particular conveyance; by a conveyance written in their flesh, in circumcision; and the counterpane written in his flesh; *I have graven thy name in the palms of my hand*[44]; but for the Gentiles, they had none of this assurance: *When they were without Christ* (says the apostle) *having no hope* (that is, no covenant to ground a hope upon) *ye were without God in this world*[45]. To contemplate God himself, and not in Christ, is to be without God. And then, for Christ to be preached to such as these, to make this sun to set at noon to the Jews, and rise at midnight to the antipodes, to the Gentiles, this was such an abundant, such a superabundant mercy, as might seem almost to be above the bargain, above the contract, between Christ and his Father; more than was conditioned and decreed for the price of his blood, and the reward of his death: for when God said, I will declare my decree; that is, what I intended to give him, which is expressed thus, *I will set him my king upon my holy hill of Sion*[46]; which seems to concern the Jews only: God adds then, *Postula à me*, Petition to me, make a new suit to me; *et dabo tibi Gentes: I will give thee not only the Jews, but the Gentiles for thine inheritance:* and therefore *Lætentur Gentes*, says David, *Let the Gentiles rejoice*[47]; and we in them, that Christ hath asked us at his Father's hand, and received us: and *Lætentur insulæ*, says that prophet too, *Let the islands rejoice;* and we in them, that he hath raised us out of the sea, out of the ocean-sea, that overflowed all the world with ignorance; and out of the Mediterranean Sea, that hath flowed into so many other lands; the sea of Rome, the sea of superstition.

There was then a great mercy in that, *predicatus Gentibus*, that he was preached to the Gentiles; but the great power is in the next, *creditus mundo*, that he was believed in the world. We have a calling in our church; that makes us preachers: and we have canons in our church; that makes us preach: and we bring a duty, and find favour; that makes us preach here: there is a power here, that makes bills of preachers: but in whose

[44] Isaiah xlix. 16. [45] Eph. ii. 12.
[46] Psalm ii. 6. [47] Psalm xcvii. 1.

power is it to make bills of believers? *Oportet accedentem credere*, says St. Paul, *He that comes hither should believe before he comes*[48]: but, *Benedictus sis egrediens*, says Moses, *God bless you with the power of believing, when you go from hence*[49]: where St. James says, *You deceive yourselves, if you be hearers, and not doers*[50]; How far do you deceive yourselves, if you come not half-way, if you be hearers, and not believers? Tiberius, who spoke all upon disguises, took it ill, if he were believed: he that was crucified under Tiberius, who always speaks clearly, takes it worse, if he be not believed; for, he hath reduced all to the *tantummodo crede*, only believe, and thou art safe: if we take it higher or lower; either above, in hearing only, or below, in working only, we may miss. It is not enough to hear sermons; it is not enough to live a moral honest life; but take it in the midst, and that extends to all; for there is no believing without hearing, nor working without believing. Be pleased to consider this great work of believing, in the matter, what it was that was to be believed: that that Jesus, whose age they knew, must be antedated so far, as that they must believe him to be elder than Abraham: that that Jesus, whose father and mother, and brothers and sisters, they knew, must be believed to be of another family, and to have a father in another place; and yet he to be as old as his father; and to have another proceeding from him, and yet he to be no older than that person who proceeded from him: that that Jesus, whom they knew to be that carpenter's son, and knew his work, must be believed to have set up a frame, that reached to heaven, out of which no man could, and in which any man might be saved: Was it not as easy to believe, that those tears which they saw upon his cheeks, were pearls; that those drops of blood, which they saw upon his back, were rubies; that that spittle, which they saw upon his face, was enamel: that those hands which they saw buffet him, were reached out to place him in a throne: and that that voice which they heard cry, *Crucifige*, *Crucify him*, was a *Vivat Rex*, *Long live Jesus of Nazareth king of the Jews;* as to believe, that from that man, that worm, and no man, ingloriously traduced as a conjurer,

[48] Heb. xi. 6. [49] Deut. xxviii. 6. [50] James i. 22.

ingloriously apprehended as a thief, ingloriously executed as a traitor; they should look for glory, and all glory, and everlasting glory? And from that melancholic man, who was never seen to laugh in all his life, and *whose soul was heavy unto death;* they should look for joy, and all joy, and everlasting joy: and for salvation, and everlasting salvation from him, who could not save himself from the ignominy, from the torment, from the death of the cross? If any state, if any convocation, if any wise man had been to make a religion, a gospel; would he not have proposed a more probable, a more credible gospel, to man's reason, than this? Be pleased to consider it in the manner too: It must be believed by preaching, by the foolishness of preaching, says the apostle; by a few men, that could give no strength to it; by ignorant men, that could give no reason for it; by poor men, that could give no pensions, nor preferments in it: that this should be believed, and believed thus, and believed by the world, the world that knew him not; *He was in the world, and the world knew him not*[51]: the world that hated them, who would make them know him; *I have chosen you*, says Christ, *and therefore the world hateth you*[52]: that then when *mundus totus in maligno positus*[53], the world, and all the world, not only was, but was laid in malignity and opposition against Christ; that then the world, and all the world, the world of ignorance, and the world of pride, should believe the Gospel; that then the Nicodemus, the learned and the powerful man of the world, should stand out no longer, but to that one problem, *quomodo*, how can a man be born again that is old; and presently believe, that a man might be born again even at the last gasp: that then they which followed him, should stand no longer upon their *durus sermo*, that it was a hard saying, that they must eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and presently believe that there was no salvation, except they did eat and drink that flesh and blood: that Mary Magdalene, who was not only tempted (is there any that is not so?) but overcome with the temptations (and how many are so!) and possessed, and possessed with seven devils, should presently hearken after the powerful charm of the Gospel, and presently believe that she

[51] John i. 10. [52] John xv. 19. [53] 1 John v. 19.

should be welcome into his arms, after all her prostitutions: that the world, this world, all this world, should believe this, and believe it thus; this was the apostle's *altitudo divitiarum*, the depth of the riches of God's wisdom[54]: and this is his *longitudo*, and *latitudo*, the breadth, and length, and heighth, and depth, which no man can comprehend[55]. Theudas rose up, *Dicens se esse aliquem*, he said he was somebody; and he proved nobody. Simon Magus rose up, *Dicens se esse aliquem magnum*, saying, he was some great body[56]; and he proved as little. Christ Jesus rose up, and said himself not to be somebody, nor some great body; but that there was nobody else, no other name given under heaven, whereby we should be saved; and was believed. And therefore, if any man think to destroy this general, by making himself a woful instance to the contrary; Christ is not believed in all the world, for I never believed in Christ: so poor an objection, requires no more answer, but that that will still be true in the general; Man is a reasonable creature, though he be an unreasonable man.

Now when he was thus preached to the Gentiles, and thus believed in the world, that is, means thus established, for believing in him, he had done all that he had to do here, and therefore, *Receptus in gloria*, he was received into glory: he was received, assumed, taken; therefore he did not vanish away; he had no airy, no imaginary, no fantastical body; he was true man: and then he was received, re-assumed, taken again, and so was in glory before; and therefore was true God. This which we are fain to call glory, is an inexpressible thing, and an incommunicable: *Surely I will not give my glory unto another*, says God in Isaiah[57], we find great titles attributed to, and assumed by princes, both spiritual and temporal: *Celsitudo vestra, et vestra majestas*, is daily given, and duly given amongst us: and *Sanctitas vestra, et vestra beatitudo*, is given amongst others. Aben-Ezra, and some other rabbins mistake this matter so much, as to deny that any person in the Old Testament ever speaks of himself in the plural number, *Nos, we:* that is mistaken by them; for there are examples[58]. But it is more mistaken in practice, by the generals, nay

[54] Rom. xi. 33. [55] Eph. iii. 18. [56] Acts v. 36.
[57] Isaiah xlviii. 11. [58] 1 Kings xii. 9, and xxii. 3; 2 Chron. x. 9.

provincials of some orders of friars, when they sign and subscribe in form and style of princes, *Nos frater*, *We friar N.*, &c. It is not hard to name some, that have taken to themselves the addition of *Dirus* in their life-time; a style so high, as that Bellarmine denies that it appertains to any saint in heaven: and yet these men have canonized themselves, without the consent of Rome; and yet remained good sons of that mother too: we shall find in ancient styles, that high addition, *Eternitas nostra*, *Our eternity:* and not only in an ancient, but in our own days, another equal to that, given to a particular cardinal, *Numen vestrum*, *Your godhead.* We find a letter in Baronius, to a pope, from a king of Britain (and so Baronius leaves it, and does not tell us which Britain; he could have been content to have had it thought ours; but he that hath abridged his book[59], hath abridged his Britain too, there it is Britannia minor: but he was a king, and therefore had power, if he filled his place; and wisdom too, if he answered his name; for his name was Solomon) and this king we find reduced to this lowness, as that he writes to that bishop, Adrian II., in that style, *Precor omnipotentiam dignitatis vestræ:* he gives him the title of God, Almighty. But two or three years before, he was far from it; then, when he writ, he placed his own name above the pope's: but it is a slippery declination, if it be not a precipitation, to come at all under him: great titles have been taken, ambition goes far; and great given, flattery goes as far: greater than this in the text, perchance have; but it hath not fallen within my narrow reading, and observation, that ever prince took, that ever subject gave this title, *Gloria nostra*, or *vestra;* May it please your glory, or, It hath seemed good to our glory. *Glory be to God on high; and glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*, and no more. As long as that scurf, that leprosy sticks to everything in this world, *Vanitas, vanitatem*, that all is vanity: can any glory in anything of this world, be other than vain glory? What title of honour hath any man had in any state, in court, that some prison in that state hath not had men of that title in it? Nay, what title hath any herald's book, that Lucifer's book hath not? Or who can be so great in this world, but that as great as he have perished in the

[59] Spondanus.

next? *As it is not good for men to eat much honey*[60]; so, for men to search their own glory, is not glory. Crowns are the emblems of glory; and kings out of their abundant greatness and goodness, derive and distribute crowns to persons of title; and by those crowns, and those titles, they are *consanguinei regis*, the king's cousins. Christ Jesus is crowned with glory in heaven, and he sheds down coronets upon you; honour, and blessings here, that you might be *consanguinei regis;* contract a spiritual kindred with that king, and be *idem Spiritus cum Domino*, as inseparable from his Father, as he himself is. The glory of God's saints in heaven, is not so much to have a crown, as to lay down that crown at the feet of the Lamb. The glory of good men here upon earth, is not so much to have honour, and favour, and fortune, as to employ those beams of glory, to his glory that gave them. In our poor calling, God hath given us grace; but grace for grace, as the apostle says, that is, grace to derive, and convey, and seal grace to you. To those of higher rank, God hath given glory; and glory for glory; glory therefore to glorify him, in a care of his glory. And because he dwells in *luce inaccessibili*, in a glorious light which you cannot see here; glorify him in that wherein you may see him, in that wherein he hath manifested himself; glorify him in his glorious Gospel: employ your beams of glory, honour, favour, fortune, in transmitting his Gospel in the same glory to your children, as you received it from your fathers: for in this consists this mystery of godliness, which is, faith with a pure conscience: and in this lies your best evidence, that you are already co-assumed with Christ Jesus into glory, by having so laid an unremovable hold upon that kingdom which he hath purchased for you, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. To which glorious Son of God, &c.

[60] Prov. xxv. 27.

SERMON CXXXVI.

A LENT SERMON PREACHED TO THE KING, AT WHITEHALL, FEBRUARY 12, 1629.

MATTHEW vi. 21.

For, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

I HAVE seen minute-glasses; glasses so short-lived. If I were to preach upon this text, to such a glass, it were enough for half the sermon; enough to show the wordly man his treasure, and the object of his heart (*for, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*) to call his eye to that minute-glass, and to tell him, there flows, there flies your treasure, and your heart with it. But if I had a secular glass, a glass that would run an age; if the two hemispheres of the world were composed in the form of such a glass, and all the world calcined and burnt to ashes, and all the ashes, and sands, and atoms of the world put into that glass, it would not be enough to tell the godly man what his treasure, and the object of his heart is. A parrot, or a stare, docile birds, and of pregnant imitation, will sooner be brought to relate to us the wisdom of a council-table, than any Ambrose, or any Chrysostom, men that have gold and honey in their names, shall tell us what the sweetness, what the treasure of heaven is, and what that man's peace, that hath set his heart upon that treasure. As nature hath given us certain elements, and all bodies are composed of them; and art hath given us a certain alphabet of letters, and all words are composed of them: so, our blessed Saviour, in these three chapters of this Gospel, hath given us a sermon of texts, of which, all our sermons may be composed. All the articles of our religion, all the canons of our church, all the injunctions of our princes, all the homilies of our fathers, all the body of divinity, is in these three chapters, in this one sermon in the Mount: where, as the preacher concludes his sermon with exhortations to practice, (*whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them*[1]) so he fortifies his sermon, with his own practice,

[1] Matt. vii. 24.

(which is a blessed and a powerful method) for, as soon as h came out of the pulpit, as soon as he came down from the Mount, he cured the first leper he saw[1], and that, without all vain glory: for he forbade him to tell any man of it.

Of this noble body of divinity, one fair limb is in this text, *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* Immediately before, our blessed Saviour had forbidding us the laying up of treasure in this world, upon this reason, that *here moths and rust corrupt, and thieves break in, and steal.* There, the reason is, because the money may be lost; but here, in our text it is, because the man may be lost: *for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also:* so that this is equivalent to that, *What profit to gain the whole world, and lose a man's whole soul*[2]? Our text, therefore, stands as that proverbial, that hieroglyphical letter, Pythagoras's Y; that hath first a stalk, a stem to fix itself, and then spreads into two beams. The stem, the stalk of this letter, this Y, is in the first word of the text, that particle of argumentation, *for:* Take heed where you place your treasure: for it concerns you much, where your heart be placed; and, *where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* And then opens this symbolical, this catechistical letter, this Y, into two horns, two beams, two branches; one broader, but on the left-hand, denoting the treasures of this world; the other narrower, but on the right-hand, treasure laid up for the world to come. Be sure ye turn the right way: for, *where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

First then, we bind ourselves to the stake, to the stalk, to the staff, the stem of this symbolical letter, and consider in it, that firmness and fixation of the heart, which God requires. God requires no unnatural things at man's hand: whatsoever God requires of man, man may find imprinted in his own nature, written in his own heart. This firmness then, this fixation of the heart, is natural to man: every man does set his heart upon something: and Christ in this place does not so much call upon him, that he would do so, set his heart upon something; as to be sure that he set it upon the right object. And yet truly, even this first work, to recollect ourselves, to recapitulate ourselves, to

[1] Matt. viii. 1. [2] Matt. xvi. 26.

assemble and muster ourselves, and to bend our hearts entirely and intensely, directly, earnestly, emphatically, energetically, upon something, is, by reason of the various fluctuation of our corrupt nature, and the infinite multiplicity of objects, such a work as man needs to be called upon, and excited to do it. Therefore is there no word in the Scriptures so often added to the heart, as that of entireness; *Toto corde, omni corde, pleno corde:* Do this with all thine heart, with a whole heart, with a full heart: for whatsoever is indivisible, is immoveable; a point, because it cannot be divided, cannot be moved: the centre, the poles, God himself, because he is indivisible, is therefore immoveable. And when the heart of man is knit up in such an entireness upon one object, as that it does not scatter, nor subdivide itself; then, and then only is it fixed. And that is the happiness in which David fixes himself; not in his *Cor paratum, My heart is prepared, O God, my heart is prepared;* (for so it may be, prepared even by God himself, and yet scattered and subdivided by us:) but, in his *Cor fixum, My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; awake my glory, awake my psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early, and praise thee, O Lord, among the people*[4]. A triumph that David returned to more than once: for he repeats the same words, with the same pathetical earnestness again[5]. So that his glory, his victory, his triumph, his peace, his acquiescence, his all-sufficiency in himself, consisted in this, that his heart was fixed: for this fixation of the heart, argued and testified an entireness in it. When God says, *Fili, da mihi cor; My son, give me thy heart;* God means, the whole man. Though the apostle say, *The eye is not the man, nor the ear is not the man*[6]; he does not say, the heart is not the man: the heart is the man; the heart is all: and, as Moses was not satisfied with that commission that Pharaoh offered him, that all the men might go to offer sacrifice[7]; but Moses would have all their young, and all their old; all their sons, and all their daughters; all their flocks, and all their herds; he would have all; so, when God says, *Fili, da mihi cor, My son, give me thy heart,* God will not be satisfied with the eye, if I contemplate him in his works: (for that is but the godliness of the natural man) nor satisfied with the ear, with hearing many ser-

[4] Psalm lvii. 7. [5] Psalm cviii. 1. [6] 1 Cor. xii. 17. [7] Exod. x. viii.

mons: (for that is but a new invention, a new way of making beads, if, as the papist thinks all done, if he have said so many *aves*, I think all done, if I have heard so many sermons.) But God requires the heart, the whole man, all the faculties of that man: for only that that is entire, and indivisible, is immoveable: and that that God calls for, and we seek for, in this stem of Pythagoras's symbolical letter, is this immoveableness, this fixation of the heart. And yet, even against this, though it be natural, there are many impediments: we shall reduce them to a few; to three; these three. First, there is *cor nullum*, a mere heartlessness, no heart at all, incogitancy, inconsideration: and then there is, *cor et cor*, *cor duplex*, a double heart, a doubtful, a distracted heart; which is not incogitancy, nor inconsideration, but perplexity and irresolution: and lastly, *cor vagum*, a wandering, a wayfaring, a weary heart; which is neither inconsideration, nor irresolution, but inconstancy. And this is a trinity against our unity; three enemies to that fixation and entireness of the heart, which God loves: inconsideration, when we do not debate; irresolution, when we do not determine; inconstancy, when we do not persevere: and upon each of these, be pleased to stop your devotion, a few minutes.

The first is, *cor nullum*, no heart at all, incogitancy, thoughtlessness. An idle body, is a disease in a state; an idle soul, is a monster in a man. *That body that will not work, must not eat*[a], but starve: that soul that does not think, not consider, cannot be said to actuate, (which is the proper operation of the soul) but to evaporate; not to work in the body, but to breathe, and smoke through the body. We have seen estates of private men wasted by inconsideration, as well as by riot; and a soul may perish by a thoughtlessness, as well as by ill thoughts: God takes it as ill to be slighted, as to be injured: and God is as much slighted *in corde nullo*, in our thoughtlessness and inconsideration, as he is opposed and provoked *in corde maligno*, in a rebellious heart. There is a good nullification of the heart, a good bringing of the heart to nothing. For the fire of God's Spirit may take hold of me, and (as the disciples that went with Christ to Emmaus, were affected) my heart may burn within me, when the Scriptures are

[a] 2 Thess. iii. 10.

opened, that is, when God's judgments are denounced against my sin; and this heat may overcome my former frigidity and coldness, and overcome my succeeding tepidity and lukewarmness, and may bring my heart to a mollification, to a tenderness, as Job found it; *The Almighty hath troubled me, and made my heart soft*[9]: for there are hearts of clay, as well as hearts of wax; hearts, whom these fires of God, his corrections, harden. But if these fires of his, these denunciations of his judgments, have overcome first my coldness, and then my lukewarmness, and made my heart soft for better impressions; the work is well advanced, but it is not all done: for metal may be soft, and yet not fusile; iron may be red-hot, and yet not apt to run into another mould. Therefore there is a liquefaction, a melting, a pouring out of the heart, such as Rahab speaks of, to Joshua's spies[10]; (*As soon as we heard how miraculously God had proceeded in your behalf, in drying up Jordan, all our hearts melted within us, and no man had any spirit left in him.*) And when upon the consideration of God's miraculous judgments or mercies, I come to such a melting and pouring out of my heart, that there be no spirit, that is, none of mine own spirit left in me; when I have so exhausted, so evacuated myself, that is, all confidence in myself, that I come into the hands of my God, as pliably, as ductilely, as that first clod of earth, of which he made me in Adam, was in his hands, in which clod of earth, there was no kind of reluctation against God's purpose; this is a blessed nullification of the heart. When I say to myself, as the apostle professed of himself, *I am nothing*[11]; and then say to God, Lord, though I be nothing, yet behold, I present thee as much as thou hadst to make the whole world of; O thou that madest the whole world of nothing, make me, that am nothing in mine own eyes, a new creature in Christ Jesus: this is a blessed nullification, a glorious annihilation of the heart. So is there also a blessed nullification thereof, in the contrition of heart, in the sense of my sins; when, as a sharp wind may have worn out a marble statue, or a continual spout worn out a marble pavement, so, my holy tears, made holy in his blood that gives them a tincture, and my holy sighs, made holy in that Spirit that breathes them in me, have

[9] Job xxiii. 16. [10] Josh. ii. 11; and v. 1. [11] 2 Cor. xii. 11

worn out my marble heart, that is, the marbleness of my heart, and emptied the room of that former heart, and so given God a vacuity, a new place to create a new heart in. But when God hath thus created a new heart, that is, re-enabled me, by his ordinance, to some holy function, then, to put this heart to nothing, to think nothing, to consider nothing; not to know our age, but by the church-book, and not by any action done in the course of our lives, for our God, for our prince, for our country, for our neighbour, for ourselves, (ourselves are our souls;) not to know the seasons of the year, but by the fruits which we eat, and not by observation of the public and national blessings, which he hath successively given us; not to know religion, but by the conveniency, and the preferments to be had in this, or in the other side; to sit here, and not to know if we be asked upon a surprise, whether it were a prayer, or a sermon, or an anthem that we heard last; this is such a nullification of the heart, such an annihilation, such an exinanition thereof, as reflects upon God himself; for, *Respuit datorem, qui datum deserit*[12], He that makes no use of a benefit, despises the benefactor. And therefore, *A rod for his back, qui indiget corde, that is without a heart*[13], Without consideration what he should do; nay, what he does. For this is the first enemy of this firmness and fixation of the heart, without which, we have no treasure; and we have done with that, *cor nullum*, and pass to the second, *cor et cor*, *cor duplex*, the double, the divided, the distracted heart, which is not inconsideration, but irresolution.

This irresolution, this perplexity is intended in that commination from God, *The Lord shall give them a trembling heart*[14]: this is not that *cor nullum*, that melted heart, in which *there was no spirit left in them*, as in Joshua's time; but *cor pavidum*, a heart that should not know where to settle, nor what to wish; but, as it follows there *In the morning he shall say, Would God it were evening; and in the evening, Would God it were morning.* And this is that which Solomon may have intended in his prayer, *Give thy servant an understanding heart*[15]: *Cor docile*, so St. Hierome reads it, a heart able to conceive counsel: for that is a

[12] Tertullian.
[13] Prov. x. 13.
[14] Deut. xxviii. 65.
[15] 1 Kings iii. 9.

good disposition, but it is not all: for, the original is, *Leb shemmeany*[16], that is, *Cor audiens*, A heart willing to hearken to counsel. But all that, is not all that is asked; Solomon asks there a heart to discern between good and evil; so that it is a prayer for the spirit of discretion, of conclusion, of resolution; that God would give him a heart willing to receive counsel, and a heart capable to conceive and digest counsel, and a heart able to discern between counsel and counsel, and to resolve, conclude, determine. It were a strange ambitious patience in any man, to be content to be racked every day, in hope to be an inch or two taller at last: so is it for me, to think to be a dram or two wiser, by hearkening to all jealousies, and doubts, and distractions, and perplexities, that arise in my bosom, or in my family; which is the rack and torture of the soul. A spirit of contradiction may be of use in the greatest councils; because thereby matters may be brought into farther debatement. But a spirit of contradiction in mine own bosom, to be able to conclude nothing, resolve nothing, determine nothing, not in my religion, not in my manners, but occasionally, and upon emergencies; this is a sickly complexion of the soul, a dangerous impotency, and a shrewd and ill-presaging crisis. If Joshua had suspended his assent of serving the Lord, till all his neighbours, and their families, all the kings and kingdoms about him, had declared theirs the same way, when would Joshua have come to that protestation, *I and my house will serve the Lord?* If Esther had forborne to press for an audience to the king, in the behalf, and for the life of her nation, till nothing could have been said against it, when would Esther have come to that protestation, *I will go; and if I perish, I perish?* If one mill-stone fell from the north pole, and another from the south, they would meet, and they would rest in the centre; nature would concentre them. Not to be able to concentre those doubts, which arise in myself, in a resolution at last, whether in moral or in religious actions, is rather a vertiginous giddiness, than a wise circumspection, or wariness. When God prepared great armies, it is expressed always so, *Tanquam unis vir, Israel went out as one man*[17]. When God established his beloved David to be king, it is expressed so; *Uno corde*, he sent

[16] לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ

[17] 1 Sam. xi. 7.

them out, with *one heart to make David king*[18]. When God accelerated the propagation of his church, it is expressed so; *Una anima, The multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and one soul*[19]. Since God makes nations, and armies, and churches one heart, let not us make one heart two, in ourselves; a divided, a distracted, a perplexed, an irresolved heart: but in all cases, let us be able to say to ourselves, This we should do. God asks the heart, a single heart, an entire heart; for, whilst it is so, God may have some hope of it. But when it is a heart and a heart, a heart for God, and a heart for Mammon, howsoever it may seem to be even, the odds will be on Mammon's side against God; because he presents possessions, and God but reversions; he the present and possessory things of this world, God but the future and speratory things of the next. So then, the *cor nullum*, no heart, thoughtlessness, incogitancy, inconsideration; and the *cor duplex*, the perplexed, and irresolved, and inconclusive heart, do equally oppose this firmness and fixation of the heart which God loves, and which we consider in this stem and stalk of Pythagoras' symbolical letter: and so does that which we proposed for the third, the *cor vagum*, the wandering, the wayfaring, the inconstant heart.

Many times, in our private actions, and in the cribration and sifting of our consciences, (for that is the sphere I move in, and no higher) we do overcome the first difficulty, inconsideration; we consider seriously: and sometimes the second, irresolution; we resolve confidently: but never the third, inconstancy: if so far, as to bring holy resolutions into actions; yet never so far, as to bring holy actions into habits. That word which we read deceitful, (*The heart is deceitful above all things; who can know it*[20]?) is in the original *gnacob;* and that is not only *fraudulentum*, but *versipelle*, deceitful because it varies itself into divers forms; so that it does not only deceive others (others find not our heart the same towards them to-day, that it was yesterday) but it deceives ourselves: we know not what, nor where our heart will be hereafter. Upon those words of Esay[21], *Redite prevaricatores ad cor; Return, O sinner, to thy heart: Longe eos mittit*, says St.

[18] 1 Chron. xii. 38.
[19] Acts iv. 32.
[20] Jer. xvii. 9.
[21] Isaiah xlvi. 8.

Gregory, God knows whither that sinner is sent, that is sent to his own heart: for, where is thy heart? Thou mayest remember where it was yesterday; at such an office, at such a chamber: but yesterday's affections are changed to day, as to-day's will be, to-morrow. *They have despised my judgments;* so God complains in Ezekiel[28]; that is, They are not moved with my punishments; they call all, natural accidents: and then it follows, *They have polluted my sabbaths;* they have come to a more faint, and dilute, and indifferent way, in their religion. Now what hath occasioned this neglecting of God's judgments, and this diluteness and indifferency in the ways of religion? That that follows there, *Their hearts went after their idols:* Went? Whither? Everywhither: for, *Quot vitia tot recentes deos*[29]*:* so many habitual sins, so many idols: and so, every man hath some idol, some such sin; and then, that idol sends him to a further idol, that sin to another: for every sin needs the assistance, and countenance of another sin, for disguise and palliation. We are not constant in our sins, much less in our more holy purposes. We complain, and justly, of the church of Rome, that she would not have us receive *in utraque*, in both kinds: but, alas! who amongst us, does receive *in utraque*, so, as that when he receives bread and wine, he receives with a true sorrow for former, and a true resolution against future sins? Except the Lord of heaven create new hearts in us, of ourselves, we have *cor nullum*, no heart; all vanishes into incogitancy. Except the Lord of heaven concentre our affections, of ourselves, we have *cor et cor*, a cloven, a divided heart, a heart of irresolution. Except the Lord of heaven fix our resolutions, of ourselves, we have *cor vagum*, a various, a wandering heart; all smokes into inconstancy. And all these three are enemies to that firmness, and fixation of the heart, which God loves, and we seek after. But yet how variously soever the heart do wander, and how little awhile soever it stay upon one object; yet, that that thy heart does stay upon, Christ in this place calls thy treasure: for, the words admit well that inversion; *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*, implies this; where your heart is, that is your treasure. And so we pass from this stem and stalk of Pythagoras' symbolical letter, the firm-

[28] Ezek. xx. 16. [29] Hierome.

ness and fixation of the heart, to the horns and beams thereof: a broader, (but on the left hand) and in that, the corruptible treasures of this world; and a narrower, (but on the right hand) and in that, the everlasting treasures of the next. On both sides, that that you fix your heart upon, is your treasure; *For, where your heart is, there is your treasure also.*

Literally, primarily, radically, *thesaurus*, treasure, is no more but *Depositum in crastinum*, Provision for to-morrow; to show how little a proportion, a regulated mind, and a contented heart may make a treasure. But we have enlarged the signification of these words, provision, and, to-morrow: for, provision must signify all that can any way be compassed; and, to-morrow must signify as long as there shall be a to-morrow, till time shall be no more: but waiving these infinite extensions, and perpetuities, is there any thing of that nature, as, (taking the word treasure in the narrowest signification, to be but provision for to-morrow) we are sure shall last till to-morrow? Sits any man here in an assurance, that he shall be the same to-morrow, that he is now? You have your honours, your offices, your possessions, perchance under seal; a seal of wax; wax, that hath a tenacity, an adhering, a cleaving nature, to show the royal constancy of his heart, that gives them, and would have them continue with you, and stick to you. But then, wax, if it be heat, hath a melting, a fluid, a running nature too: so have these honours, and offices, and possessions, to them that grow too hot, too confident in them, or too imperious by them. For these honours, and offices, and possessions, you have a seal, a fair and just evidence of assurance; but have they any seal upon you, any assurance of you till to-morrow? Did our blessed Saviour give day, or any hope of a to-morrow, to that man, to whom he said, *Fool, this night they fetch away thy soul?* Or is there any of us, that can say, Christ sayed not that to him?

But yet, a treasure every man hath: *An evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil*, says our Saviour[24]: every man hath some sin upon which his heart is set; and, *Where your heart is, there is your treasure also. The treasures of wickedness profit nothing*, says Job[25]; it is true: but yet,

[24] Luke vi. 45. [25] Job x. 2.

treasures of wickedness there are. *Are there not yet treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked*[26]? Consider the force of that word, yet; yet, though you have the power of a vigilant prince executed by just magistrates; yet, though you have the piety of a religious prince, seconded by the assiduity of a laborious clergy; yet, though you have many helps, which your fathers did, and your neighbours do want, and have (by God's grace) some fruits of those many helps; yet, for all this, *Are there not yet treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked?* No! *Are there not scant measures, which are an abomination to God*, says the prophet there; which are not only false measures of merchandise, but false measures of men: for, when God says that, he intends all this; Is there not yet supplantation in court, and misrepresentations of men? When Solomon, who understood subordination of places which flowed from him, as well as the highest, which himself possessed, says, and says experimentally for his own, and prophetically for future times, *If a ruler* (a man in great place) *hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked*[27]: are there not yet misrepresentations of men in courts? Is there not yet oppression in the country? A starving of men, and pampering of dogs? *A swallowing of the needy? A buying of the poor for a pair of shoes, and a selling to the hungry refuse corn*[28]? Is there not yet oppression in the country? Is there not yet extortion in Westminster? *A justifying of the wicked for a reward, and a taking away of the righteousness of the righteous from him*[29]? Is there not yet extortion in Westminster? Is there not yet collusion and circumvention in the city? Would they not seem richer than they are, when they deal in private bargains with one another? And would they not seem poorer than they are, when they are called to contribute for the public? Have they not increased their riches by trade, and lifted up their hearts upon the increase of their riches[30]? Have they not slackened their trade, and lain down upon clothes laid to pledge[31], and ennobled themselves by an ignoble and lazy way of gain? Is there not yet collusion and circumvention in the city? Is there not yet hypocrisy in the church? In all parts thereof? Half-preachings, and half-

[26] Micah vi. 10. [27] Prov. xxix. 22. [28] Amos viii. 5.
[29] Isaiah v. 23. [30] Ezek. xxviii. 5. [31] Amos ii. 8.

hearings? Hearings and preachings without practice? Have we not national sins of our own, and yet exercise the nature of islanders, in importing the sins of foreign parts? And though we better no foreign commodity, nor manufacture that we bring in, we improve the sins of other nations; and, as a weaker grape growing upon the Rhine, contracts a stronger nature in the Canaries; so do the sins of other nations transplanted amongst us. Have we not secular sins, sins of our own age, our own time, and yet sin by precedent of former, as well as create precedents for future? And, not only silver and gold, but vessels of iron and brass, were brought into the treasury of the Lord[32]; not only the glorious sins of high places, and national sins, and secular sins; but the wretchedest beggar in the street, contributes to this treasure, the treasure of sin; and to this mischievous use, to increase this treasure, the treasure of sin, is a subsidy man. He begs in Jesus' name, and for God's sake; and in the same name, curses him that does not give. He counterfeits a lameness, or he loves his lameness, and would not be cured; for his lameness is his stock, it is his demesne, it is (as they call their occupations in the city) his mystery. *Are there not yet treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked*, when even they, who have no houses, but lie in the streets, have these treasures?

There are: and then, as the nature of treasure is to multiply, so does this treasure, this treasure of sin; it produces another treasure, *Thesaurizamus iram*, We treasure up unto ourselves *wrath against the day of wrath*[33]: for it is of the sins of the people that God speaks, when he says, *Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up amongst my treasures*[34]? He treasures up the sins of the disobedient: but where? In the treasury of his judgments. And then, that treasury he opens against us in this world, his treasures of snow, and treasures of hail[35], that is, unseasonableness of weather, barrenness and famine; and he bringeth his winds out of his treasury[36], contrary winds, or storms and tempests, to disappoint our purposes; and, as he says to Cyrus, *I will give thee (even thee Cyrus*, though God cared not for Cyrus, otherwise than as he had made Cyrus his scourge) *I will*

[32] Josh. vi. 19. [33] Rom. ii. 5. [34] Deut. xxxii. 34.
[35] Job xxxviii. 22. [36] Psalm cxxxv. 7.

give thee the treasures of darkness, and the hidden treasures of secret places[37]. God will enable enemies (though he loves not those enemies) to afflict that people that love not him. And these, war, and dearth, and sickness, are the weapons of God's displeasure; and these he pours out of his treasury, in this world. But then, for the world to come, he shall open his treasury, (for, whatsoever moved our translators to render that word, armoury, and not treasury, in that place[38], yet evidently it is treasury, and in that very word, *otzar*[39], which they translate treasury, in all those places of Job, and David, and Isaiah, which we mentioned before, and in all other places) he shall open that treasury, (says that prophet) and bring forth the weapons, not as before, of displeasure, but in a far heavier word, the weapons of his indignation. And, in the bowels and treasury of his mercy, let me beseech you, not to call the denouncing of God's indignation, a satire of a poet, or an invective of an orator: as Solomon says, *There is a time for all things;* there is a time for consternation of presumptuous hearts, as well as for redintegration of broken hearts; and the time for that, is this time of mortification, which we enter into, now. Now therefore, let me have leave to say, that the indignation of God is such a thing, as a man would be afraid to think he can express it, afraid to think he does know it; for the knowledge of the indignation of God, implies the sense and feeling thereof: all knowledge of that, is experimental; and that is a woeful way, and a miserable acquisition, and purchase of knowledge. To recollect, treasure is provision for the future: no worldly thing is so; there is no certain future: for the things of this world pass from us; we pass from them; the world itself passes away to nothing. Yet a way we have found to make a treasure, a treasure of sin; and we teach God thrift and providence: for, when we arm, God arms too; when we make a treasure, God makes a treasure too; a treasure furnished with weapons of displeasure for this world, and weapons of indignation for the world to come. But then, *As an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil; so,* (says our Saviour) *the good man, out of the good treasure of his heart,*

[37] Isaiah XLV. 3. [38] Jer. L. 25. [39] אוֹצָר

bringeth forth that which is good[40]: which is the last stroke that makes up Pythagoras' symbolical letter, that horn, that beam thereof, which lies on the right hand; a narrower way, but to a better land; through straits; it is true; but to the Pacific Sea, the consideration of the treasure of the godly man in this world, and God's treasure towards him, both in this, and the next.

Things dedicated to God, are called often, *The treasures of God; Thesauri Dei*, and *thesauri sanctorum Dei:* the treasures of God, and the treasures of the servants of God, are, in the Scriptures, the same thing[41]; and so a man may rob God's treasury, in robbing an hospital. Now, though to give a talent, or to give a jewel, or to give a considerable proportion of plate, be an addition to a treasury; yet to give a treasury to a treasury, is a more precious, and a more acceptable present; as to give a library to a library, is more than to give the works of any one author. A godly man is a library in himself, a treasury in himself, and therefore fittest to be dedicated and appropriated to God. Invest thyself therefore with this treasure of godliness: What is godliness? Take it in the whole compass thereof, and godliness is nothing but the fear of God: for, he that says in his first chapter, *Initium sapientiæ, The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom*[42]; says also, in the twenty-second, *Finis modestiæ, The fear of God is the end of modesty;* the end of humility: no man is bound to direct himself to any lower humiliation, than to the fear of God. When God promised good Hezekias all those blessings, wisdom, and knowledge, and stability, and strength of salvation; that that was to defray him, and carry him through all, was this, *The fear of the Lord shall be his treasure*[43]. And therefore, *Thesaurizate vobis fundamentum, Lay up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come*[44]. Do all in the fear of God: in all warlike preparations, remember the Lord of hosts, and fear him; in all treaties of peace, remember the Prince of peace, and fear him; in all consultations, remember the Angel of the great council, and fear him: fear God as much at noon, as at midnight; as much in the glory and splendour of his sunshine, as in

[40] Luke vi. 45. [41] 1 Chron. xxviii. 12.
[42] Prov. i. 7. [43] Isaiah xxxiii. 6. [44] 1 Tim. vi. 19.

his darkest eclipses: fear God as much in thy prosperity, as in thine adversity; as much in thy preferment, as in thy disgrace. Lay up a thousand pound to-day in comforting that oppressed soul that sues; and lay up ten thousand pound to-morrow, in paring his nails that oppresses: lay up a million one day, in taking God's cause to heart; and lay up ten millions next day, in taking God's cause in hand. Let every soul lay up a penny now, in resisting a small temptation; and a shilling anon, in resisting a greater; and it will grow to be a treasure, a treasure of talents, of so many talents, as that the poorest soul in the congregation, would not change treasure with any *plate* fleet, nor *terra-firma* fleet, nor with those three thousand millions, which (though it be perchance a greater sum than is upon the face of Europe at this day, after a hundred years embowelling of the earth for treasure) David is said to have left for the treasure of the temple[45], only to be laid up in the treasury thereof, when it was built: for the charge of the building thereof, was otherwise defrayed. *Let your conversation be in heaven*[46]: Cannot you get thither? You may see, as St. John did[47], heaven come down to you: heaven is here; here in God's church, in his word, in his sacraments, in his ordinances; set thy heart upon them, the promises of the Gospel, the seals of reconciliation, and thou hast that treasure, which is thy *viaticum*, for thy transmigration out of this world, and thy bill of exchange for the world thou goest to. For, as the wicked make themselves a treasure of sin and vanity, and then God opens upon them a treasure of his displeasure here, and his indignation hereafter: so the godly make themselves a treasure of the fear of God, and he opens unto them a treasure of grace and peace here, and a treasure of joy and glory hereafter. And when of each of these treasures, here, and hereafter, I shall have said one word, I have done.

We have treasure, though *in earthen vessels*, says the apostle[48]. We have; that is, we have already the treasure of grace, and peace, and faith, and justification, and sanctification: but yet, in earthen vessels, in vessels that may be broken; peace that may be interrupted, grace that may be resisted, faith that may be

[45] Villalp. Tom. ii. par. 2. li. 5. Dip. 3. cap. 43. fol. 503.
[46] Phil. iii. 20. [47] Rev. xxi. 2. [48] 2 Cor. iv. 7.

enfeebled, justification that may be suspected, and sanctification that may be blemished. But we look for more; for joy, and glory; for such a justification, and such a sanctification, as shall be sealed, and riveted in a glorification. Manna putrefied if it were kept by any man, but a day; but in the ark, it never putrefied. That treasure, which is as manna from heaven, grace, and peace, yet, here, hath a brackish taste: when grace, and peace, shall become joy and glory in heaven, there it will be sincere. *Sordescit quod inferiori miscetur naturæ, etsi in suo genere non sordidetur*[49]: Though in the nature thereof, that with which a purer metal is mixed, be not base; yet, it abases the purer metal. He puts his example in silver and gold; though silver be a precious metal, yet it abases gold. Grace, and peace, and faith, are precious parts of our treasure here; yet, if we mingle them, that is, compare them with the joys, and glory of heaven; if we come to think, that our grace, and peace, and faith here, can no more be lost, than our joy and glory there; we abase, and over-alloy those joys, and that glory. *The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure*, says our Saviour[50]. But is that all? Is any treasure like unto it? None: for, (to end where we begun) treasure is *Depositum in crastinum*, Provision for to-morrow. The treasure of the worldly man is not so; he is not sure of any thing to-morrow. Nay, the treasure of the godly man is not so in this world; he is not sure, that this day's grace, and peace, and faith, shall be his to-morrow. When I have joy and glory in heaven, I shall be sure of that, to-morrow. And that is a term long enough: for, before a to-morrow, there must be a night; and shall there ever be a night in heaven? No more than day in hell. *There shall be no sun in heaven*[51]; therefore no danger of a sun-set. And for the treasure itself, when the Holy Ghost hath told us, that the walls and streets of the city are pure gold, that the foundations thereof are all precious stones, and every gate of an entire pearl; what hath the Holy Ghost himself left to denote unto us, what the treasure itself within is? The treasure itself, is the Holy Ghost himself, and joy in him. As the Holy Ghost proceeds from Father and Son, but I know not how; so there shall some-

[49] Augustine. [50] Matt. xiii. 44. [51] Rev. xxi. 23.

thing proceed from Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and fall upon me, but I know not what. Nay, not fall upon me neither; but enwrap me, embrace me: for, I shall not be below them, so as that I shall not be upon the same seat with the Son, at the right hand of the Father, in the union of the Holy Ghost: rectified by the power of the Father, and feel no weakness; enlightened by the wisdom of the Son, and feel no scruple; established by the joy of the Holy Ghost, and feel no jealousy. Where I shall find the fathers of the first age, dead five thousand years before me; and they shall not be able to say they were there a minute before me. Where I shall find the blessed and glorious martyrs, who went not *per viam lacteam*, but *per viam sanguineam;* not by the milky way of an innocent life, but by the bloody way of a violent death; and they shall not contend with me for precedency in their own right, or say, We came in by purchase, and you but by pardon. Where I shall find the virgins, and not be despised by them, for not being so; but hear that redintegration, which I shall receive in Christ Jesus, called virginity, and entireness. Where all tears shall be wiped from mine eyes; not only tears of compunction for myself, and tears of compassion for others; but even tears of joy, too: for, there shall be no sudden joy, no joy unexperienced there; there I shall have all joys, altogether, always. There Abraham shall not be gladder of his own salvation, than of mine; nor I surer of the everlastingness of my God, than of my everlastingness in him. This is that treasure, of which the God of this treasure, gives us those spangles; and that single money, which this mint can coin, this world can receive, that is, prosperity, and a good use thereof, in worldly things; and grace, and peace, and faith, in spiritual. And then reserve for us the exaltation of this treasure, in the joy and glory of heaven, in the mediation of his Son Christ Jesus, and by the operation of his blessed Spirit. Amen.

SERMON CXXXVII.

PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, APRIL 21, 1616.

ECCLESIASTICUS viii. 11.

Because sentence against an evil work, is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the children of men, is fully set in them, to do evil.

WE cannot take into our meditation, a better rule, than that of the Stoic[1], *Nihil infœlicius fœlicitate peccantium;* There is no such unhappiness to a sinner, as to be happy; no such cross, as to have no crosses: nor can we take a better example of that rule, than Constantius the Arian emperor, in whose time first of all, the cross of Christ suffered that profanation, as to be an ensign of war, between Christian and Christian: when Magnentius by being an usurping tyrant, and Constantius by being an Arian heretic, had forfeited their interest in the cross of Christ, which is the ensign of the universal peace of this world, and the means of the eternal peace of the next; both brought the cross to cross the cross, to be an ensign of war, and of hostility; both made that cross, when the Father accepted for all mankind, the blood of Christ Jesus, to be an instrument for the sinful effusion of the blood of Christians. But when this heretical emperor had a victory over this usurping tyrant, this unhappy happiness transported him to a greater sin, a greater insolence, to approach so near to God himself, as to call himself *Eternum principum*, The eternal emperor; and to take into his style, and rescripts, this addition, *Eternitatem nostram*, Thus and thus, it hath pleased our eternity to proceed: yea, and to bring his Arian followers, who would never acknowledge an eternity in Christ, nor confess him to be the eternal Son of God, to salute himself by that name, *eternum Cæsarem*, the eternal emperor: so venomous, so deadly is the prosperity of the wicked to their own souls, that even from the mercy of God, they take occasion of sinning; not only thereby, but even therefore; they do not only make that their excuse, when they do sin, but their reason why they may sin; as we see

[1] Seneca.

in these words, *Because sentence against an evil work, is not executed speedily*, &c.

In which words, we shall consider, first, the general perverseness of a natural man, who by custom in sin, comes to assign a reason why he may sin; intimated in the first word, Because. And secondly, the particular perverseness of the men in this text, who assign the patience of God, to be the reason of their continuance in sin, *Because sentence is not executed speedily*. And then lastly, the illusion upon this, what a fearful state this shuts them up in, *That therefore their hearts are fully set in them, to do evil*. And these three, the perverseness of colouring sins with reasons, and the impotency of making God's mercy the reason, and the danger of obduration thereby, will be the three parts, in which we shall determine this exercise.

First then, in handling the perverseness of assigning reasons for sins, we forbid no man the use of reason in matters of religion. As St. Augustine says, *Contra Scripturam, nemo Christianus*, No man can pretend to be a Christian, if he refuse to be tried by the Scriptures: and, as he adds, *Contra ecclesiam nemo pacificus*, No man can pretend to love order and peace, if he refuse to be tried by the church: so he adds also, *Contra rationem nemo sobrius*, No man can pretend to be in his wits, if he refuse to be tried by reason. He that believes any thing because the church presents it, he hath reason to assure him, that this authority of the church is founded in the Scriptures: he that believeth the Scriptures, hath reasons that govern and assure him that those Scriptures are the Word of God. Mysteries of religion are not the less believed and embraced by faith, because they are presented, and induced, and apprehended by reason.

But this must not enthrone, this must not exalt any man's reason so far, as that there should lie an appeal, from God's judgments to any man's reason: that if he see no reason, why God should proceed so, and so, he will not believe that to be God's judgment, or not believe that judgment of God, to be just: for, of the secret purposes of God, we have an example what to say, given us by Christ himself, *Ita est, quia complacuit*[a]; *It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such:* all was in his own

[a] Matt. xi. 26.

breast and bosom, in his own good will and pleasure, before he decreed it; and as his decree itself, so the ways and executions of his decrees, are often unsearchable, for the purpose, and for the reason thereof, though for the matter of fact, they may be manifest. They that think themselves sharp-sighted and wise enough, to search into those unrevealed decrees; they who being but worms, will look into heaven; and being the last of creatures, who were made, will needs inquire, what was done by God, before God did any thing, for creating the world, *In ultimam dementiam ruerunt*, says St. Chrysostom, They are fallen into a mischievous madness, *Et ferrum ignitum, quod forcipe deberent, digitis accipiunt:* They will needs take up red-hot irons, with their bare fingers, without tongs. That which is in the centre, which should rest, and lie still, in this peace, that it is so, because it is the will of God, that it should be so; they think to toss and tumble that up, to the circumference, to the light and evidence of their reason, by their wrangling disputations.

If then it be a presumptuous thing, and a contempt against God, to submit his decrees to the examination of human reason, it must be a high treason against the majesty of God, to find out a reason in him, which should justify our sins; to conclude out of any thing which he does, or leaves undone, that either he doth not hate, or cannot punish sinners: for this destroys even the nature of God, and that which the apostle lays, for the foundation of all, *To believe that God is, and that he is a just rewarder*[3]. Adam's *Quia mulier, The woman whom thou gavest me, gave me the apple*: and Eve's *Quia serpens, Because the serpent deceived me;* and all such, are poor and unallowable pleas, which God would not admit: for there is no *quia*, no reason, why any man, at any time, should do any sin. God never permits any perplexity to fall upon us, so, as that we cannot avoid one sin, but by doing another: or that we should think ourself excusable by saying, *Quia inde minus malum*, There is less harm in a concubine, than in another wife; or, *Quia inde aliquod bonum*, That my incontinence hath produced a profitable man to the state or to the church though a bastard; much less to say, *Quia obdormivit Deus*, Tush, God sees it not, or cares not for it, though he see it.

[3] Heb. xi. 6.

If thou ask then, why thou shouldst be bound to believe the creation, we say, *Quia unus Deus*, Because there can be but one God; and if the world be eternal, and so no creature, the world is God. If thou ask why thou shouldst be bound to believe Providence, we say, *Quia Deus remunerator*, Because God is to give every man according to his merits. If thou ask why thou shouldst be bound to believe that, when thou seest he doth not give every man according to his merits, we say, *Quia inscrutabilia judicia ejus; O how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* For, thou art yet got no farther, in measuring God, but by thine own measure; and thou hast found no other reason to lead thee, to think, that God doth not govern well, but because he doth not govern so, to thine understanding, as thou shouldst, if thou wert God. So that thou dost not only make thy weakness, but thy wickedness, that is, thy hasty disposition, to come to a present revenge, when any thing offends thee, the measure, and the model, by which the frame of God's government should be erected; and so thou comest to the worst distemper of all, *insanire cum ratione*, to go out of thy wits, by having too much, and to be mad with too much knowledge; not to sin out of infirmity, or temptation, or heat of blood, but to sin in cold blood, and upon just reason, and mature considerations, and so deliberately and advisedly to continue to sin.

Now the particular reason, which the perverseness of these men produceth here, in this text, is, *Because God is patient and long-suffering*. So he is; so he will be still: their perverseness shall not pervert his nature, his goodness. As God bade the prophet Hosea do, he hath done himself: *Go*, says he, *and take to thee, a wife of fornication, and children of fornication*[4]; so hath he taken us, guilty of spiritual fornication. But as in the fleshly fornications of an adulterous wife, the husband is, for the most part, the last that hears of them: so, for our spiritual fornications, such is the lothness, the patience, the longanimity of our good and gracious God, that though he do know our sins, as soon as they speak, as soon as they are acted, (for that is *peccatum cum voce*, says St. Gregory, a speaking sin, when any sinful thought is produced into act) yea, before they speak, as soon as they are con-

[4] Hosea i. 2.

ceived; yet he will not hear of our sins, he takes no knowledge of them, by punishing them, till our brethren have been scandalized, and led into temptation by them; till his law have been evacuated, that that use of the law, which is, to show sin to our consciences, be annihilated in us; till such a cry come up to him by our often and professed sinning, that it concerns him in his honour, (which he will give to none) and in his care of his churches, which he hath promised to be, till the end of all, to take knowledge of them. Yea, though this cry be come up to his ears, though it be a loud cry, either by the nature of the sin, (as heavy things make a great noise in the moving) or by reason of the number of the sins, and the often doing thereof, (for, as many children, will make as great a noise as a loud crier; so will the custom of small sins cry as loud, as those which are called *peccata clamantia*, crying sins) though this cry be increased by this liberty, and professed sinning, that, as the prophet says, *They declare their sins, and hide them not, as Sodom did*[5]; though the cry of the sin be increased by the cry of them, that suffer oppression by that sin, as well as by the sin itself, as the voice of Abel's blood cried from earth to heaven[6]; yea, though this cry ring about God's ears, in his own bed-chamber, under the altar itself, in that *Usquequo Domine?* when the martyrs cry out with a loud voice, *How long, Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood*[7]*!* Yet God would fain forbear his revenge, he would fain have those martyrs *rest for a little space, till their fellow-servants and their brethren were fulfilled.* God would try, what Cain would say to that interrogatory, *Where is thy brother Abel?* And though the cry of Sodom were great, and their sin exceeding grievous, yet, says God, *I will go down, and see, whether they have done altogether according unto that cry; and if not, I may know:* God would have been glad to have found error in their indictment; and when he could not, yet if fifty, forty-five, thirty, twenty, ten, had been found righteous, he had pardoned all: *Adeo malum, quasi cum difficultate credidit, cum audivit*[8]; So loth is God to believe ill of man, when he doth hear it.

This then is his patience: but why is his patience made a

[5] Isaiah iii. 9. [6] Gen. iv. 10.
[7] Revel. vi. 10. [8] Gregory.

reason of their continuance in sins? Is it because there is no sentence denounced against sin? These busy and subtle extractors of reasons, that can distil, and draw poison out of manna, occasions of sin, out of God's patience, will not say so, that there is no sentence denounced. The word that is here used, *pithgam*[9], is not truly an Hebrew word: and though in the Book of Job, and in some other parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, we find sometimes some foreign and outlandish word, derived from other nations; yet, in Solomon's writing very rarely; neither doth Solomon himself, nor any other author, of any part of the Hebrew Bible, use this word, in any other place, than this one. The word is a Chaldee word; and hath amongst them, the same signification and largeness, as *dabar* in Hebrew; and that includes all *a verbo ad legem;* from a word suddenly and slightly spoken, to words digested and consolidated into a law. So that, though the Septuagint translate this place, *Quia non est facta contradictio;* as though the reason of this sinner's obduration might have been, that God had not forbidden sin; and though the Chaldee paraphrast express this place thus, *Quia non est factum verbum ultionis;* as though this sinner made himself believe, that God had never spoken word of revenge against sinners: yet, this sinner makes not that his reason, that there is no law, no judgment, no sentence given: for, every book of the Bible, every chapter, every verse almost, is a particular Deuteronomy, a particular renewing of the law from God's mouth, *Morte morieris, Thou shalt die the death;* and of that sentence from Moses' mouth, *Pereundo peribitis, You shall surely perish;* and of that judgment from the prophet's mouth, *Non est pax impiis, There is no peace to the wicked.* And if this obdurate sinner could be such a Goth and Vandal, as to destroy all records, all written laws; if he could evacuate and exterminate the whole Bible, yet he would find this law in his own heart, this sentence pronounced by his own conscience, *Stipendium peccati mors est,* Treason is death, and sin is treason.

His reason is not, that there is no law; he sees it: nor that he know no law; his heart tells it him: nor that he hath kept

[9] פִּתְגָם

that law; his conscience gives judgment against him: nor that he hath a pardon for breaking that law; for he never asked it: and, besides, those pardons have in them that clause, *Ita quod se bene gerat;* Every pardon binds a man to the good behaviour; and by relapses into sin, we forfeit our pardons for former sins. All their reason, all their comfort, is only a reprieve, and a respite of execution: *Distulit securim, attulit securitatem*[10]; God hath taken the axe from their necks, and they have taken security into their hearts; sentence is not executed.

Execution is the life of the law; but then, it is the death of the man: and therefore whosoever makes quarrels against God, or arguments of obduration, out of this respite of execution, would he be better pleased with God, if God came to a speedy execution? But let that be true, where there is no execution, there is no reverence to the law; there is truly, and in effect, no law: the law is no more a law without execution, than a carcase is a man. And so much, certainly, the word, which is here rendered *sententia facta*, doth properly signify, a judgment perfected, executed. When Esau was born hairy[11], and so in the likeness of a grown and perfect man, he was called by the word of this text, *Gnesau*[12], *Esau, factus, perfectus.* And so, when God had perfected all his works, that is, said then, that he saw, that all was good that he had made; where there is the same word, that he had perfected[13]. So that, if the judgments of God had been still without execution; if all those curses[14]; *Cursed shalt thou be in the town, and cursed in the field; cursed in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy land, and in the fruit of thy cattle; cursed when thou comest in, and when thou goest out. The Lord shall send thee cursings, and trouble, and shame, in all thou setst thy hand to. The Lord shall make a pestilence cleave to thee, and a consumption, and a fever. The Lord shall make the heavens above, as brass, and the earth under thee, as iron;* with all those curses and maledictions, which he flings, and slings, and stings the soul of the sinner, so vehemently, so pathetically, in that catalogue of comminations, and interminations, in that

[10] Augustine. [11] Gen. xxv. 25. [12] עָשָׂו, perfecit.
[13] Gen. i. 31. [14] Deut. xxviii. 15.

place; if all these were never brought into execution, we should say, at best, of those laws, and judgments of God, as the Roman lawyer did of that severe law of the twelve tables, by which law, he that was indebted to many men, and not able to pay, was to be cut in pieces, and divided proportionably amongst his creditors, *Eo consilio tanta immanitas pœnæ denuntiata est, ne ad eam unquam perveniretur;* Therefore so grievous a punishment was inflicted, that that law might never come to execution: for, from the enacting of that law, to the last times, in that government, there was never any example, of one execution of that law: so we should say, that God laid those severe penalties upon sins, only to deter men from doing them, and not with any purpose to inflict those penalties. In laws, to the making whereof, there concurs, besides the authority of the prince, the counsel and the consent of the subject, there are sometimes laws made, without any purpose of ordinary execution; of which, the civil wisdom, and the religious conscience, and the godly moderation of the prince, is made a depository, and a feoffee in trust; and those laws are only put into his hands, as a bridle, the better to rule and govern that great charge committed to him, in emergent necessities, though not in an ordinary execution of those penal laws. But who was a counseller to God, or who inserted any provisos or *non obstante*'s into his laws? or who conditioned them, with any such reservations, that they should have no ordinary execution? And therefore an ordinary execution they have always had.

The reason why they are sometimes, and why they are not always executed, St. Chrysostom hath assigned; *Si nullus puniretur, nemo existimaret Deum pre-esse rebus humanis; si omnes, nemo expectaret futuram resurrectionem:* If God should punish no sins here, no man would believe a God; and if God should presently punish all here, no man would be afraid of a future judgment. There the obdurate man may find a reason of the manner of God's proceeding, in the execution of his judgments: and if he dare stand the arguing of this case, out of precedent, out of record, out of the history of God, in his word, he must hear heavy judgments denounced, and executed, in cases, where he would hardly discern any sin to have been committed, at least,

no sin proportionable to that punishment. If he were in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, of having reserved a little of their own, whatsoever should befall, he would never see counsel, nor petition the judge, never apprehend danger in this case; and yet, God declared by the mouth of Peter, that Satan had filled their hearts, and that they had lied to the Holy Ghost; and a heavy judgment of present death, was executed upon them both. If he had been of the jury, for that man of God, who, though God had forbidden him to eat and drink in that place[15], yet, when an old prophet came to him, and told him, that God had spoken to him by an angel, that he should go with him, and eat, did go, and eat with him, he would have acquitted him of any offence herein; and yet God's judgment overtook him, and he was slain by a lion. But if he will hear the case of Saul, who did but reserve some of the spoil[16], and that purchased with the blood of the people, and that pretended to be reserved for God's service, for sacrifice; and yet Saul heard that judgment, *Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and transgression is idolatry: because thou hast cast away the word of the Lord, therefore he hath cast thee away from being king.* If he will hear Achan's case, who had taken an excommunicate thing to his own use[17], and the heavy judgment thereupon, *Inasmuch as thou hast troubled us, the Lord shall trouble thee this day: and so, all Israel stoned him.* If he will hear Eli's case[18], against whom, only for indulgence to his sons, God prepared, and studied and meditated judgments, and threatened beforehand, when he said to Samuel, *Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, whereof whosoever shall hear, his two ears shall tingle:* and so, soon after, upon the heavy news, that Israel was discomfited, that the ark was taken, that his two sons were slain, *Eli fell from his seat, and broke his neck, and died.* If he remember Uzzah's case[19], who for putting his hand to the ark, when it was ready to fall, felt the wrath of God, and died in the place. If he study all this title, of God's heavy judgments upon sins, not great in the outward appearance; and then come to them by the consideration of the nature of the first sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve, and finds there, such a lightness in that sin of eating

[15] 1 Kings xiii. [16] 1 Sam. xv. [17] Joshua vii.
[18] 1 Sam. iv. [19] 2 Sam. vi.

forbidden fruit, that he durst do it, if it were to do again; as though it were no more to disobey God, when he forbade the eating of fruit, than to disobey his physician in that point; and yet shall see the heavy judgment of God upon all posterity for that sin, (which he esteems so small a one) to extend so far, as that all his particular sins, even this very sin of undervaluing Adam's sin, and his very sin of obduration, is but a punishment of Adam's sin. If he shall climb by this ladder, to the highest step of all, from Adam in paradise, to the angels in heaven, and see, that in those angels, a sin only of omission, of a not turning toward God, (for there was no creature then to turn upon) in so pure natures, and done but once, was so heavily punished, as that the blood of Christ Jesus hath not washed it away; certainly the hardness, the flintiness of this obdurate sinner, must necessarily be so much mollified, so much entendered, as to confess, that he can make no good argument out of that, that the judgments of God are not executed.

But yet, howsoever that be, they are not executed speedily How desperate a state art thou in, if nothing will convert thee, but a speedy execution, after which, there is no possibility, no room left for a conversion! God is the Lord of hosts, and he can proceed by martial law: he can hang thee upon the next tree; he can choak thee with a crumb, with a drop, at a voluptuous feast; he can sink down the stage and the player, the bed of wantonness, and the wanton actor, into the jaws of the earth, into the mouth of hell: he can surprise thee, even in the act of sin; and dost thou long for such a speedy execution, for such an expedition? Thou canst not lack examples, that he hath done so upon others, and will no proof serve thee, but a speedy judgment upon thyself? Scatter thy thoughts no farther then, contract them in thyself, and consider God's speedy execution upon thy soul, and upon thy body, and upon thy soul and body together. Was not God's judgment executed speedily enough upon thy soul, when in the same instant that it was created, and conceived, and infused, it was put to a necessity of contracting original sin, and so submitted to the penalty of Adam's disobedience, the first minute? Was not God's judgment speedily enough executed upon thy body, if before it had any temporal life, it had a spiritual

death; a sinful conception, before any inanimation? If hereditary diseases from thy parents, gouts and epilepsies, were in thee, before the diseases of thine own purchase, the effects of thy licentiousness and thy riot; and that from the first minute that thou begannest to live, thou begannest to die too. Are not the judgments of God speedily enough executed upon thy soul and body together, every day, when as soon as thou committest a sin, thou are presently left to thine impenitence, to thine insensibleness, and obduration? Nay, the judgment is more speedy than so: for that very sin itself, was a punishment of thy former sins.

But though God may begin speedily, yet he intermits again, he slacks his pace; and therefore the execution is not speedy. As it is said of Pharaoh often, Because the plagues ceased, (though they had been laid upon him) *Ingratum est cor Pharaonis*, Pharaoh's heart was hardened. But first we see, by that punishment which is laid upon Eli, that with God it is all one, to begin, and consummate his judgment: (*When I begin, I will make an end*[20].) And when Herod took a delight in that flattery and acclamation of the people, *It is the voice of God, and not of man; the angel of the Lord smote him immediately*[21], and the worms took possession of him, though (if we take Josephus' relation for truth) he died not in five days after. Howsoever, if we consider the judgments of God in his purpose and decree, there they are eternal: and for the execution thereof, though the wicked sinner dissemble his sense of his torments, and, as Tertullian says of a persecutor, Herminianus, who being tormented at his death, in his violent sickness, cried out, *Nemo sciat, ne gaudeant Christiani;* Let no man know of my misery, lest the Christians rejoice thereat: so these sinners suppress these judgments of God, from our knowledge, because they would not have that God, that inflicts them, glorified therein, by us: yet they know, their damnation hath never slept, nor let them sleep quietly: and, in God's purpose, the judgment hath been eternal, and they have been damned as long as the devil; and that is an execution speedy enough. But because this appears not so evidently, but that they may disguise it to the world, and (with much ado) to

[20] 1 Sam. iii. 11. [21] Acts xii. 22.

their own consciences; therefore *their hearts are fully set in them, to do evil.* And so we pass to our third part.

This is that perverseness, which the heathen philosopher Epictetus apprehends, and reprehends; That whereas everything is presented to us, *cum duabus ansis*, with two handles, we take it still, by the wrong handle. This is *tortuositas serpentis*, the wryness, the knottiness, the entangling of the serpent. This is that which the apostle takes such direct knowledge of[22], *Despisest thou the riches of God's bountifulness, and longsuffering, not knowing that it leads thee to repentance?* St. Chrysostom's comparison of such a sinner to a vulture, that delights only in dead carcases, that is, in company dead in their sins, holds best, as himself notes, in this particular, that the vulture *perhorrescit fragrantiam unguenti*, he loths, and is ill-affected with any sweet savour: for so doth this sinner find death, in that sovereign balm of the patience of God, and he dies of God's mercy: *Et quid infelicius illis, qui bono odore moriuntur?* says St. Augustine: In what worse state can any man be, than to take harm of a good air? But, as the same father adds, *Numquid quia mori voluisti, malum fecisti odorem?* This indisposition in that particular man, does not make this air, an ill air; and yet this abuse of the patience of God, comes to be an infectious poison, and such a poison, as strikes the heart; and so general, as to strike the heart of the children of men; and so strongly, as that their hearts should be fully set in them, to do evil.

First then, what is this setting of the heart upon evil; and then, what is this fulness, that leaves no room for a cure? When a man receives figures and images of sin, into his fancy and imagination, and leads them on to his understanding and discourse, to his will, to his consent, to his heart, by a delightful dwelling upon the meditation of that sin; yet this is not a setting of the heart upon doing evil. To be surprised by a temptation, to be overthrown by it, to be held down by it for a time, is not it. It is not when the devil looks in at the window to the heart, by presenting occasions of temptations, to the eye; nor when he comes in at the door, to our heart, at the ear, either in lascivious discourses, or satirical and libellous defamations of other men:

[22] Rom. ii. 4.

it is not, when the devil is put to his circuit, to seek whom he may devour, and how he may corrupt the king by his council, that is, the soul by the senses: but it is, when by a habitual custom in sin, the sin arises merely and immediately from myself: it is, when the heart hath usurped upon the devil, and upon the world too, and is able and apt to sin of itself, if there were no devil, and if there were no outward objects of temptation: when our own heart is become *spontanea insania, et voluntarius dæmon*[23], such a wilful madness, and such a voluntary and natural devil to itself, as that we should be ambitious, though we were in an hospital; and licentious, though we were in a wilderness; and voluptuous, though in a famine: so that such a man's heart, is as a land of such giants, where the children are born as great, as the men of other nations grow to be; for those sins, which in other men have their birth, and their growth, after their birth, they begin at a concupiscence, and proceed to a consent, and grow up to actions, and swell up to habits; in this man, sin begins at a stature and proportion above all this; he begins at a delight in the sin, and comes instantly to a defence of it, and to an obduration and impenitibleness in it: this is the evil of the heart, by the misuse of God's grace, to divest and lose all tenderness and remorse in sin.

Now for the incurableness of this heart, it consists first in this, that there is a fulness, it is fully set to do evil: and such a full heart hath no room for a cure; as a full stomach hath no room for physic. The mathematician could have removed the whole world with his engine, if there had been any place to have set his engine in. Any man might be cured of any sin, if his heart were not full of it, and fully set upon it: which setting, is indeed, in a great part, an unsettledness, when the heart is in a perpetual motion, and in a miserable indifferency to all sins: it may be fully set upon sin, though it be not vehemently affected to any one sin. The reason which is assigned, why the heart of man, if it receive a wound, is incurable, is the palpitation, and the continual motion of the heart: for, if the heart could lie still, so that fit things might be applied to it, and work upon it, all wounds, in all parts of the heart, were not necessarily mortal:

[23] Chrysostom.

so, if our hearts were not distracted, in so many forms, and so divers ways of sin, it might the better be cured of any one. St. Augustine had this apprehension, when he said, *Audeo dicere utile esse cadere in aliquod manifestum peccatum, ut sibi displiceant:* It is well for him, that is indifferent to all sins, if he fall into some such misery by some one sin, as brings him to a sense of that, and of the rest. St. Augustine, when he says this, says he speaks boldly in saying so, *Audeo dicere:* but we may be so much more bold, as to say further, That that man had been damned, if he had not sinned that sin: for the heart of the indifferent sinner baits at all that ever rises, at all forms and images of sin: *When he sees a thief, he runs with him; and with the adulterer he hath his portion*[24]*:* and as soon as it contracts any spiritual disease, any sin, it is presently, not only in *morbo acuto*, but in *morbo complicato;* in a sharp disease, and in a manifold disease, a disease multiplied in itself. Therefore it is, as St. Gregory notes, that the prophet proposes it, as the hardest thing of all, for a sinner to return to his own heart, and to find out that, after it is strayed, and scattered upon so several sins. *Redite prevaricatores ad cor*[25], says the prophet: and, says that father, *Longe eis mittit, cum ad cor redire compellit;* God knows whither he sends them, when he sends them to their own heart: for, since it is true which the same father said, *Vix sancti inveniunt cor suum*, The holiest man cannot at all times find his own heart, (his heart may be bent upon religion, and yet he cannot tell in which religion; and upon preaching, and yet he cannot tell which preacher; and upon prayer, and yet he shall find strayings and deviations in his prayer) much more hardly is the various and vagabond heart of such an indifferent sinner, to be found by any search. If he inquire for his heart, at that chamber where he remembers it was yesterday, in lascivious and lustful purposes, he shall hear that it went from thence to some riotous feasting, from thence to some blasphemous gaming, after, to some malicious consultation of entangling one, and supplanting another; and he shall never trace it so close, as to drive it home, that is, to the consideration of itself, and that God that made it; nay, scarce to make it consist in any one particular sin.

[24] Psalm L. 18. [25] Isaiah XLVI. 8.

That which St. Bernard feared in Eugenius, when he came to be pope, and so a distraction of many worldly businesses, may much more be feared in a distraction of many sins, *Cave ne te trahant, quo non vis;* Take heed lest these sins carry thee farther, than thou intendest: thou intendest but pleasure, or profit; but the sin will carry thee farther: *Quæris quo?* says that father; Dost thou ask whither? *Ad cor durum*, To a senselessness, a remorselessness, a hardness of heart: *Nec pergas quærere*, (says he) *quid illud sit;* Never ask what that hardness of heart is: for, if thou know it not, thou hast it.

This then is the fulness, and so the incurableness of the heart, by that reason of perpetual motion; because it is in perpetual progress from sin to sin, he never considers his state. But there is another fulness intended here, that he is come to a full point, to a consideration of his sin, and to a station and settledness in it, out of a foundation of reason, as though it were, not only an excusable, but a wise proceeding, because God's judgments are not executed. But when man becomes to be thus fully set, God shall set him faster: *Iniquitas tua in sacculo signata*[26]; His transgression shall be sealed up in a bag, and God shall sew up his iniquity: and *Quid cor hominis nisi sacculus Dei*[27]? What is this bag of God, but the heart of that sinner? There, as a bag of a wretched miser's money, which shall never be opened, never told till his death, lies this bag of sin, this frozen heart of an impenitent sinner; and his sins shall never be opened, never told to his own conscience, till it be done to his final condemnation. God shall suffer him to settle, where he hath chosen to settle himself, in an insensibleness, an unintelligibleness, (to use Tertullian's word) of his own condition: and, *Quid miserior misero non miserante seipsum*[28]? Who can be more miserable than that man, who does not commiserate his own misery? How far gone is he into a pitiful estate, that neither desires to be pitied by others, nor pities himself, nor discerns that his state needs pity! *Invaluerat ira tua super me, et nesciebam*, says blessed St. Augustine: Thy hand lay heavy upon me, and I found it not to be thy hand: because the maledictions of God are honeyed and candied over, with a little crust or sweetness of worldly ease, or reprieve, we do not apprehend

[26] Job xiv. 17. [27] Gregory. [28] Augustine.

them in their true taste, and right nature. *Obsurdueram stridore catenarum mearum*, says the same father: The jingling and rattling of our chains and fetters, makes us deaf: the weight of the judgment takes away the sense of the judgment. This is the full setting of the heart to do evil, when a man fills himself with the liberty of passing into any sin, in an indifferency; and then finds no reason why he should leave that way, either by the love, or by the fear of God. If he prosper by his sin, then he finds no reason; if he do not prosper by it, yet he finds a wrong reason. If unseasonable floods drown his harvest, and frustrate all his labours, and his hopes; he never finds, that his oppressing, and grinding of the poor, was any cause of those waters, but he looks only how the wind sate, and how the ground lay; and he concludes, that if Noah, and Job, and Daniel had been there[19] their labour must have perished, and been drowned, as well as his. If a vehement fever take hold of him, he remembers where he sweat, and when he took cold; where he walked too fast, where his casement stood open, and where he was too bold upon fruit, or meat of hard digestion; but he never remembers the sinful and naked wantonnesses, the profuse and wasteful dilapidations of his own body, that have made him thus obnoxious and open to all dangerous distempers. Thunder from heaven burns his barns, and he says, What luck was this! if it had fallen but ten foot short or over, my barns had been safe: whereas his former blasphemings of the name of God, drew down that thunder upon that house, as it was his; and that lightening could no more fall short or over, than the angel which was sent to Sodom could have burnt another city, and have spared that; or than the plagues of Moses and of Aaron could have fallen upon Goshen, and have spared Egypt. His gomers abound with manna, he overflows with all for necessities, and with all delicacies, in this life; and yet he finds worms in his manna, a putrefaction, and a mouldering away, of this abundant state; but he sees not that that is, because his manna was gathered upon the Sabbath, that there were profanations of the name and ordinances of God, mingled in his means of growing rich. To end all, this is the true use that we are to make of the long-suffering and patience

[19] Ezek. xiv. 14.

of God, that when his patience ends, ours may begin: that if he forbear others rather than us, we do not expostulate, as in Job, *Wherefore do the wicked live, and become old, and grow mighty in power*[30]? but rather, if he chastise us rather than others, say with David, *Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy ways, though thou hast sore broken us, in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death*[31]: and that if sentence be executed upon us, we may make use of his judgment; and if not, we may continue, and enlarge his mercies towards us. Amen.

SERMON CXXXVIII.

PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, NOVEMBER 2, 1617.

PSALM LV. 19.

Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

IN a prison, where men withered in a close and perpetual imprisonment; in a galley, where men were chained to a laborious and perpetual slavery; in places, where any change that could come, would put them in a better state, than they were before, this might seem a fitter text, than in a court, where every man having set his foot, or placed his hopes upon the present happy state, and blessed government, every man is rather to be presumed to love God, because there are no changes, than to take occasion of murmuring at the constancy of God's goodness towards us. But because the first murmuring at their present condition, the first innovation that ever was, was in heaven; the angels kept not their first estate: though as princes are gods, so their well-governed courts, are copies, and representations of heaven; yet the copy cannot be better than the original: and therefore, as heaven itself had, so all courts will ever have, some persons, that are under the increpation of this text, that, *Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God:* at least, if I shall meet with no conscience, that finds in himself a guiltiness of this sin, if I shall give him no occasion of repentance, yet I shall give him occasion of praying, and magnifying that gracious God, which

[30] Job xxi. 7. [31] Psalm xliv. 18.

hath preserved him from such sins, as other men have fallen into, though he have not: for I shall let him see first, the dangerous slipperiness, the concurrence, the coincidence of sins; that a habit and custom of sin, slips easily into that dangerous degree of obduration, that men come to sin upon reason; they find a *quia*, a cause, a reason why they should sin: and then, in a second place, he shall see, what perverse and frivolous reasons they assign for their sins, when they are come to that; even that which should avert them, they make the cause of them, *Because they have no changes.* And then, lastly, by this perverse mistaking, they come to that infatuation, that dementation, as that they lose the principles of all knowledge, and all wisdom: *The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom;* and, *because they have no changes, they fear not God.*

First then, we enter into our first part, the slipperiness of habitual sin, with that note of St. Gregory, *Peccatum cum voce, est culpa cum actione; peccatum cum clamore, est culpa cum libertate;* Sinful thoughts produced into actions, are speaking sins; sinful actions continued into habits, are crying sins. There is a sin before these; a speechless sin, a whispering sin, which nobody hears, but our own conscience; which is, when a sinful thought or purpose is born in our hearts, first we rock it, by tossing, and tumbling it in our fancies, and imaginations, and by entertaining it with delight and consent, and with remembering, with how much pleasure we did the like sin before, and how much we should have, if we could bring this to pass; and as we rock it, so we swathe it, we cover it, with some pretences, some excuses, some hopes of covercling* it; and this is that, which we call *morosam delectationem*, a delight to stand in the air and prospect of a sin, and a lothness to let it go out of our sight. Of this sin St. Gregory says nothing in this place, but only of actual sins, which he calls speaking; and of habitual, which he calls crying sins. And this is as far, as the Schools, or the casuists do ordinarily trace sin; to find out *peccata infantia*, speechless sins, in the heart; *peccata vocatia*, speaking sins, in our actions; and *peccata clamantia*, crying and importunate sins, which will not

* The folio edition has "coveraling." I find "covercle" (*couvercle*, French) used in Chaucer for a lid: and have corrected the text accordingly.—Ed.

suffer God to take his rest, no nor to fulfil his own oath, and protestation: he hath said, *As I live, I would not the death of a sinner;* and they extort a death from him. But besides these, here is a farther degree, beyond speaking sins, and crying sins; beyond actual sins and habitual sins; here are *peccata cum ratione*, and *cum disputatione;* we will reason, we will debate, we will dispute it out with God, and we will conclude against all his arguments, that there is a *quia*, a reason, why we should proceed and go forward in our sin: *Et pudet non esse impudentes*, as St. Augustine heightens this sinful disposition; men grow ashamed of all holy shamefacedness, and tenderness towards sin; they grow ashamed to be put off, or frighted from their sinful pleasure, with the ordinary terror of God's imaginary judgments; ashamed to be no wiser than St. Paul would have them, to be moved, or taken hold of, *by the foolishness of preaching*[1]; or to be no stronger of themselves than so, that we should trust to another's taking of our infirmities, and bearing of our sicknesses; or to be no richer, or no more provident than so, to sell all, and give it away, and make a treasure in heaven, and all this for fear of thieves, and rust, and canker, and moths here. That which is not allowable in courts of justice, in criminal causes, to hear evidence against the king, we will admit against God; we will hear evidence against God; we will hear what man's reason can say in favour of the delinquent, why he should be condemned; why God should punish the soul eternally, for the momentary pleasures of the body: nay, we suborn witnesses against God, and we make philosophy and reason speak against religion, and against God; though indeed, *Omne verum, omni vero consentiens;* whatsoever is true in philosophy, is true in divinity too; howsoever we distort it, and wrest it to the contrary. We hear witnesses, and we suborn witnesses against God, and we do more; we proceed by recriminations, and a cross bill, with a *quia Deus*, because God does as he does, we may do as we do; because God does not punish sinners, we need not forbear sins; whilst we sin strongly, by oppressing others, that are weaker, or craftily by circumventing others that are simple. This is but *leoninum*, and *vulpinum*, that tincture of the lion, and of the fox, that brutal nature that

[1] 1 Cor. i. 21.

is in us. But when we come to sin, upon reason, and upon discourse, upon meditation, and upon plot, this is *humanum*, to become the man of sin, to surrender that, which is the form, and essence of man, reason, and understanding, to the service of sin. When we come to sin wisely and learnedly, to sin logically, by a *quia*, and an *ergo*, that, because God does thus, we may do as we do, we shall come to sin through all the arts, and all our knowledge, to sin grammatically, to tie sins together in construction, in a syntaxis, in a chain, and dependance, and coherence upon one another: and to sin historically, to sin over sins of other men again, to sin by precedent, and to practise that which we had read: and we come to sin rhetorically, persuasively, powerfully; and as we have found examples, for our sins in history, so we become examples to others, by our sins, to lead and encourage them, in theirs; when we come to employ upon sin, that which is the essence of man, reason, and discourse, we will also employ upon it, those which are the properties of man only, which are, to speak, and to laugh; we will come to speak, and talk, and to boast of our sins, and at last, to laugh and jest at our sins; and as we have made sin a recreation, so we will make a jest of our condemnation. And this is the dangerous slipperiness of sin, to slide by thoughts and actions, and habits, to contemptuous obduration.

Now amongst the manifold perversenesses and incongruities of this artificial sinning, of sinning upon reason, upon a *quia*, and an *ergo*, of arguing a cause for our sin; this is one, that we never assign the right cause: we impute our sin to our youth, to our constitution, to our complexion; and so we make our sin our nature: we impute it to our station, to our calling, to our course of life; and so we make our sin our occupation: we impute it to necessity, to perplexity, that we must necessarily do that, or a worse sin; and so we make our sin our direction. We see the whole world is *ecclesia malignantium*, a synagogue, a church of wicked men[s]; and we think it a schismatical thing, to separate ourselves from that church, and we are loth to be excommunicated in that church; and so we apply ourselves to that, we do as they do, with the wicked we are wicked; and so we make our

[s] Psalm xxvi. 5.

sin our civility. And though it be some degree of injustice, to impute all our particular sins, to the devil himself, after a habit of sin hath made us *spontaneos dæmones*[3], devils to ourselves: yet we do come too near an imputing our sins to God himself, when we place such an impossibility in his commandments, as make us lazy, that because we cannot do all, therefore we will do nothing; or such a manifestation and infallibility in his decree, as makes us either secure, or desperate; and say, The decree hath saved me, therefore I can take no harm; or, The decree hath damned me, therefore I can do no good. No man can assign a reason in the sun, why his body casts a shadow: why all the place round about him, is illumined by the sun, the reason is in the sun; but of his shadow, there is no other reason, but the grossness of his own body: why there is any beam of light, any spark of life, in my soul, he that is the Lord of light and life, and would not have me die in darkness, is the only cause; but of the shadow of death, wherein I sit, there is no cause, but mine own corruption. And this is the cause, why I do sin; but why I should sin there is none at all.

Yet in this text the sinner assigns a cause; and it is *Quia non mutationes*, Because they have no changes. God hath appointed that earth, which he hath given to the sons of men, to rest, and stand still; and that heaven which he reserves for those sons of men, who are also the sons of God, he hath appointed to stand still too: all that is between heaven and earth, is in perpetual motion and vicissitude; but all that is appointed for man, man's possession here, man's reversion hereafter, earth and heaven, is appointed for rest, and stands still; and therefore God proceeds in his own way, and declares his love most, where there are fewest changes. This rest of heaven, he hath expressed often, by the name of a kingdom, as in that petition, *Thy kingdom come:* and that rest, which is to be derived upon us, here in earth, he expresses in the same phrase too, when having presented to the children of Israel, an inventory and catalogue of all his former blessings, he concludes all, includes all in this one, *Et prosperata es in regnum*, I have advanced thee to be a kingdom: which form, God hath not only still preserved to us, but hath also

[3] Chrysostom.

united kingdoms together; and to give us a stronger body, and safer from all changes, whereas he hath made up other kingdoms, of towns and cities, he hath made us a kingdom of kingdoms, and given us as many kingdoms to our kingdom, as he hath done cities to some other. God's gracious purpose then to man, being rest, and a contented reposedness in the works of their several callings; and his purpose being declared upon us, in the establishing and preserving of such a kingdom, as hath the best body, (best united in itself, and knit together) and the best legs to stand upon, (peace and plenty) and the best soul to inanimate and direct it, (truth and religion) and the best spirits to make all parts answerable and useful to one another, (wisdom and vigilancy in the prince, gratitude and cheerfulness in the subject:) and since God hath gone so far, once in our time already, in expressing his care of our rest and quiet, as to give us a change, without change, an alteration of persons, and not of things, that we saw old things done away, in the secession of one, and all things made new in the succession of another sovereign, and all this newness done without innovation; so that, as David says of the whole earth[4], we might say again of this land, *Terra tremuit et quievit*, The earth shaked, and stood still at once; it was all one act, to have been afraid, and to have been instantly secured again, since nothing beyond that, nothing equal to that change, can be imagined by us from God; may it be ever his gracious pleasure, to continue to us, the enjoying of our present rest, without showing us any more changes. As (to end this branch) it were a strange enormity, a strange perverseness in any man, to plant a garden in any place, therefore, because he foresaw an earthquake in that place, that would disorder and discompose his garden again; or to build in any place therefore, because the fire were likeliest to take hold of that street; that is, to make anything the cause of an action, which should naturally enforce the contrary: so it is an irreligious distemper, to be the bolder in sin, because we have no changes, or to defer our conversion from sin, till changes, till afflictions come. For Satan knew the air, and complexion, and disposition of the world, well enough: he argued not impertinently, nor frivolously, for the

[4] Psalm LXXVI. 8.

general, though he were deceived in the particular, in Job[5], when he said to God, *Stretch out thy hand, and touch his bones, and his flesh, and see if he will not blaspheme thee to thy face.* Afflictions, and changes in this life, do not always direct us upon God: the displeasure of a prince may make a harsh person more supple, more appliable than before; his graces received may make him more accessible, more equal, more obsequious, than before: and losses and forfeitures sustained, or threatened, may make him more apt to give, to bleed out, to redeem his dangers, than before: but these changes do not always make him an honester man, nor a better Christian than before. And therefore, says the apostle[6], *Study to be quiet;* labour to find a testimony of God's love to you, in your present estate, and never put yourself, either for temporal, or spiritual amendment, upon changes.

To proceed then: this shutting up of themselves against the fear of God, is not merely *quia non mutationes*, because there are no changes; but, *quia non illis*, because they have no changes. It is a dangerous preterition, not to bring a man's self into consideration; but to consider no man but himself, to make himself the measure of all, is as dangerous a narrowness. The epigrammatist describes the atheist so, that he desires no better argument to prove that there is no God, but that he sees himself, *Dum negat ista beatum*, prosper well enough, though he do not believe this prosperity to proceed from God. What miseries soever fall upon others, affect not him. He may have seen, since he was born, the greatest kingdom in Christendom likely to have been broken in pieces, and cantoned into petty seigniories, and so left no kingdom: he may have seen such a danger upon our next neighbours, as that, when the powerfullest enemy in Christendom hung over their heads, and lay upon their backs, they bred a more dangerous enemy in their own bosoms, and bowels, by tearing themselves in pieces, with differences, in points of subdivided religion, and impertinent scruples, unjustly called points of religion; in which men leave peace, and unity, and charity, the true ways of salvation, and will inquire nothing, but how soon, how early God damned them: they must know, *sub quibus consulibus*, in whose reign, in whose mayoralty, what hour of the

[5] Job ii. 5. [6] 1 Thess. iv. 11.

day, and what minute of that hour, God's eternal decree of election or reprobation was made. Many, very many of these changes he may have seen and heard; but all these he hears, as though he heard them out of Livy, or out of Berosus, or in letters from China, or Japan; and not as though they concerned his time, or his place, or his observation. To contract this: we have all been either in wars, and seen men fall at our right hand, and at our left, by the bullet; or at sea, and seen our consort sunk by tempest, or taken by pirates; or in the city, and seen the pestilence devour our parents above us, our children below us, our friends round about us; or in the court, and seen God's judgments overtake the most secure, and confident: we have all seen such changes as these everywhere; but *quia non nobis*, because the bullet, the shipwreck, the pirate, the pestilence, the judgments have not reached us, in our particular persons, they have not imprinted the fear of God in us.

And the word of the text, carries it farther than so: it is not because there are no changes, for they abound; nor because they have had none, for none escapes; but it is, *quia non habent*, because they have no present, nor imminent danger in their contemplation now; because no affliction lies upon them now, therefore they are secure. It is not *quia non habuerunt;* every person, every state, every church, hath had changes: because the Roman church will needs be all the world, we may consider all the world in her, so far; she hath had such a change, as hath awakened other princes to reassume, and to restore to themselves, and their crowns, their just dignities; so she hath had a change in honour and estimation. She hath had such a change, as hath contracted and brought her into a narrower channel, and called in her overflowings; so she hath had a change in power and jurisdiction. She hath had such a change, as hath lessened her temporal treasure everywhere, and utterly abolished her imaginary spiritual treasure, in many places; she hath had a change in means, in profit, and revenue: she hath had such a change, as that they who by God's commandment are come out from her, have been equal, even in number, to them who have adhered to her; such a change, as hath made her doctrine appear, some to be the doctrines of men, and some the doctrines of devils: such

a change in reputation, in jurisdiction, and in revenue, and in power, and in manifestion of her disguises, she hath had: but *quia non habet*, because she decays not every day, the Reformation seems to her to be come to a period, as high as it shall go: because she hath a misapprehension of some faintness, some declinableness towards her again, even in some of our professors themselves, who (as she thinks) come as near to her, as they dare: because she hath gained of late upon many of the weaker sex, women laden with sin; and of weaker fortunes, men laden with debts; and of weaker consciences, souls laden with scruples; therefore she imagines that she hath seen the worst, and is at an end of her change; though this be but indeed a running, an ebbing back of the main river, but only a giddy and circular eddy, in some shallow places of the stream, (which stream, God be blessed, runs on still currently, and constantly, and purely, and intemerately, as before) yet because her corrections are not multiplied, because her absolute ruin is not accelerated, she hath some false conceptions of a general returning towards her, and she sears up herself against all sense of truth, and all tenderness of peace; and because she hath rid out one storm, in Luther and his successors, therefore she fears not the Lord for any other, *Quia non habent, Because she hath no changes*, now.

Habuerunt then, they have had changes; and *habebunt*, they shall have more, and greater: *Impii non stabunt*, says David, The wicked shall not stand: in how low ground soever they stand, and in how great torment soever they stand, yet they shall not stand there, but sink to worse; and at last, *non stabunt in judicio*, they shall not stand in judgment, but fall there, from whence there is no rising: *non stabunt:* they shall not stand, though they think they shall; they shall counterfeit the seals of the Holy Ghost, and delude themselves with imaginary certitudes of salvation, and illusory apprehensions of decrees of election: nay, *non stabunt*, they shall not be able to think that they shall stand: that which the apostle saith[1], *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*, belongs only to the godly; only they can think, deliberately, and upon just examination of the marks and evidences of the elect, that they shall stand: God shall suffer the

[1] 1 Cor. x. 12.

wicked to sink down, not to a godly sense of their infirmity, and holy remorse of the effects thereof; but yet lower than that, to a diffident jealousy, to a desperate acknowledgment, that they cannot stand in the sight of God: they shall have no true rest at last: they shall not stand; nay, they shall not have that half, that false comfort by the way; they shall not be able to flatter themselves by the way, with that imagination that they shall stand.

Now, both the ungodly, and godly too, must have changes: in matter of fortune, changes are common to them both: and then, in all, of all conditions, *Mortalitas mutabilitas*, says St. Augustine: even this, that we must die, is a continual change. The very same word, which is here, *kalaph*, is in Job also[8]: *All the days of my appointed time, till my changing come.* And because this word which we translate *changing*, is there spoken in the person of a righteous man, some translators[9] have rendered that place, *Donec veniat sancti nativitas mea*, Till I be born again: the change, the death of such men, is a better birth: and so the Chaldee paraphrasts, the first exposition of the Bible, have expressed it, *Quousque rursus fiam*, Till I be made up again by death: he does not stay to call the Resurrection a making up; but this death, this dissolution, this change, is a new creation; this divorce is a new marriage; this very parting of the soul, is an infusion of a soul, and a transmigration thereof out of my bosom, into the bosom of Abraham. But yet, though it is all this, yet it is a change; *Maxima mutatio est mutabilitatis in immutabilitatem*[10], To be changed so, as that we can never be changed more, is the greatest change of all. All must be changed so far, as to die: yea, those who shall, in some sort, escape that death; those whom the last day shall surprise upon earth, though they shall not die, yet they shall be changed. *Statutum est omnibus, semel mori*[11], All men must die once; we live all under that law. But *statutum nemini bis mori:* since the promise of a Messiah, there is no law, no decree, by which any man must necessarily die twice; a temporal death, and a spiritual death too. It is not the man, but the sinner, that dies the second death: God sees sin in that man, or else that man had never seen the second

[8] Job xiv. 14.
[9] Symmachus.
[10] Bernard.
[11] Heb. ix. 27.

death. So we shall all have one change, besides those which we have all had; good and bad must die: but the men in this text, shall have two. But whatsoever changes are upon others in the world, whatsoever upon themselves; whatsoever they have had, whatsoever they are sure to have; yet, *Quia non habent, non timent Deum*; Because they have none now, they fear not God. And so we are come to our third and last part.

They fear not God: this is such a state, as if a man who had been a schoolmaster all his life, and taught others to read, or had been a critic all his life, and *ingeniosus in alienis*, over-witty in other men's writings, had read an author better, than that author meant, and should come to have use of his reading, to save his life at the bar, when he had his book, for some petty felony, and then should be stricken with the spirit of stupidity, and not be able to read then. Such is the state of the wisest, of the learnedest, of the mightiest in this world: if they fear not God, they have forgot their first letters; they have forgot the basis and foundation of all power, the reason and the purpose of all learning. the life and the soul of all counsel and wisdom: for, *The fear of God is the beginning of all.* They are all fallen into the danger of the law; they have all sinned: they are offered their book, the merciful promises of God to repentant sinners, in his Word; and they cannot read, they cannot apply them, to their comfort: there is Scripture, but not translated, not transferred to them: there is Gospel, but not preached to them; there are epistles, but not superscribed to them.

It is an hereditary sentence, and hath passed from David in his Psalms[12], to Solomon in his Proverbs[13], and then to him that gleaned after them both, the author of Ecclesiasticus[14], *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.* All three profess all that, and more than that. It is blessedness itself, says the father, David; blessedness itself, says the son, Solomon; and *Plenitudo sapientiæ*, and *Omnis sapientia*, says the other, the fulness of wisdom, and the only wisdom. Job had said it before them all, *Ecce, timor Domini, ipsa est sapientia*[15]; The fear of the Lord, is wisdom itself: and the prophet Esay said it after, of Hezechias,

[12] Psalm cxi. 10.
[13] Prov. i. 7.
[14] Ecclus. i. 16.
[15] Job xxviii. 28.

There shall be stability of thy times, strength, salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; for, the fear of the Lord shall be thy treasure[16]. It is our supply, if we should fear want, and it is our reason that we cannot fear want; for he that fears God, fears nothing else. As therefore the Holy Ghost hath placed the beginning of wisdom in this fear; so hath he the consummation and perfection of this wisdom, even in the perfect pattern of all wisdom, in the person of Christ himself, *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon thee, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of God*[17]. For, without this fear, there is no courage, no confidence, no assurance: and therefore Christ begun his passion with a fear, in his agony, *Tristis anima*, My soul is heavy; but that fear delivered him over to a present conformity to the will of God, in his *Verumtamen, Yet not my will, but thine be done:* and he ended his passion with a fear, *Eli, Eli, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* and that fear delivered him over to a present assurance, *In manus tuas Domine*, confidently to commend his spirit into his hands, whom he seemed to be afraid of.

Since then the Holy Ghost, whose name is love; since God, who is love itself, disposes us to this fear, we may see in that, that neither God himself, nor those of whom God said, Ye are gods, that is, all those who have authority over others, can be loved so as they should, except they be feared, so as they should be too: if you take away due fear, you take away true love. Even that fear of God, which we use to call servile fear, which is but an apprehension of punishment, and is not the noblest, the perfectest kind of fear, yet it is a fear, which our Saviour counsels us to entertain; *Fear him that can cast soul and body into hell*[18]; even that fear, is some beginning of wisdom. That fear Job had use of, when he said, *Quid faciam cum surrexerit ad judicandum Deus*[19]? Here I may lay hold upon means of restitution; but when the Lord shall raise himself to judgment, how shall I stand? So also had David use of this fear, *A judiciis tuis timui*[20]: However I was ever confident in thy mercy, yet I was

[16] Isaiah xxxiii. 6. [17] Isaiah xi. 2.
[18] Matt. x. 28. [19] Job xxxi. 14.
[20] Psalm cxix. 120.

in fear of thy judgment. It is that fear which St. Basil directs us to, upon those words, *Timorem Domini docebo vos*[21], I will teach you the fear of the Lord, *Cogita profundum barathrum*, To learn to fear God, he sends us to the meditation of the torments of hell. And so it is that fear, which wrought that effect in St. Hierome: *Ego ob Gehennæ metum carcere isto me damnavi;* For fear of that execution, I have shut myself up in this prison; for fear of perishing in the next world, I banish myself from this: there is a beginning, there is a great degree of wisdom, even in this fear.

Now, as the fear of God's punishments disposes us to love him, so that fear which the magistrate imprints, by the execution of his laws, establishes that love which preserves him, from all disestimation and irreverence: for, whom the enemy does not fear, the subject does not love. As no peace is safe enough, where there is no thought of war; so the love of man towards God, and those who represent him, is not permanently settled, if there be not a reverential fear, a due consideration of greatness, a distance, a distinction, a respect of rank, and order, and majesty. If there be not a little fear, by justice at home, and by power and strength abroad, mingled in it, it is not that love, which God requires to be first directed upon himself, and then reflected upon his stewards and vicegerents: for, as every society is not friendship, so every familiarity is not love.

But, to conclude: as he will be feared, so he will be feared, no otherwise, than as he is God: *Non timuerunt Deum*, is the increpation of the text, *They feared not God.* It is *timor Dei*, and not *timor Jehovæ:* God is not here expressed by the name of Jehovah, that unexpressible and unutterable, that incomprehensible and unimaginable name of Jehovah. God calls not upon us, to be considered as God in himself, but as God towards us; not as he is in heaven, but as he works upon earth: and here, not in the school, but in the pulpit; not in disputation, but in application. It is not *timor Jehovæ*, nor it is not *timor Adonai:* God does not call himself in this place, the Lord: for, to be Lord, to be proprietary of all, this is *Potestas tam utendi quam abutendi*, It gives the Lord of that thing power, to do, absolutely, what he will

[21] Psalm xxxiv. 4.

with that which is his: and so, God, as absolute Lord, may damn without respect of sin, if he will; and save without respect of faith, if he will. But God is pleased to proceed with us, according to that contract which he hath made with us, and that law which he hath given to us, in those two tables, *Tantummodo crede, Only believe, and thy faith shall save thee;* and, *Fac hoc et vives, Live well, and thy good works shall make sure thy salvation.* Lastly, God does not call himself here *Dominum exercituum, The Lord of hosts;* God would not only be considered, and served by us, when he afflicts us with any of his swords, famine, war, pestilence, malice, or the like; but the fear required here, is to fear him as God, and as God presented in this name, *Elohim;* which, though it be a name primarily rooted in power and strength, (for *El* is *Deus fortis*, The powerful God; and as there is no love without fear, so there is no fear without power) yet properly it signifies his judgment, and order, and providence, and dispensation, and government of his creatures. It is that name, which goes through all God's whole work of the creation, and disposition of all creatures, in the first of Genesis: in all that, he is called by no other name than this, the name God; not by Jehovah, to present an infinite majesty; nor by Adonai, to present an absolute power; nor by Tzebaoth, to present a force, or conquest: but only in the name of God, his name of government. All ends in this; to fear God, is to adhere to him, in his way, as he hath dispensed and notified himself to us; that is, as God is manifested in Christ, in the Scriptures, and applied to us out of those Scriptures, by the church: not to rest in nature without God, nor in God without Christ, nor in Christ without the Scriptures, nor in our private interpretation of Scripture, without the church. Almighty God fill us with these fears, these reverences; that we may reverence him, who shall at last bring us, where there shall be no more changes; and hath already placed us in such a government, as being to us a type and representation of the kingdom of heaven, we humbly beg, may evermore continue with us, without changes, in government, or in religion. Amen.

SERMON CXXXIX.

PREACHED TO THE HOUSEHOLD AT WHITEHALL, APRIL 30, 1626.

MATTHEW ix. 13.

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

SOME things the several evangelists record severally, one, and no more. St. Matthew, and none but St. Matthew, records Joseph's jealousy and suspicion[1], that his wife Mary had been in a fault, before her marriage; and then his temper withal, not frequent in that distemper of jealousy, not to exhibit her to open infamy for that fault; and yet his holy discretion too, not to live with a woman faulty that way, but to take some other occasion, and to put her away privily: in which, we have three elements of a wise husband; first, not to be utterly without all jealousy and providence, and so expose his wife to all trials, and temptations, and yet not to be too apprehensive and credulous, and so expose her to dishonour and infamy; but yet not to be so indulgent to her faults, when they were true faults, as by his connivance, and living with her, to make her faults, his: and all this we have out of that which St. Matthew records, and none but he. St. Mark, and none but St. Mark records[2], that story, of Christ's recovering a dumb man, and almost deaf, of both infirmities: in which, when we see, that our Saviour Christ, though he could have recovered that man with a word, with a touch, with a thought, yet was pleased to enlarge himself in all those ceremonial circumstances, of imposition of hands, of piercing his ears with his fingers, of wetting his tongue with spittle, and some others, we might thereby be instructed, not to under-value such ceremonies as have been instituted in the church, for the awakening of men's consideration, and the exalting of their devotion; though those ceremonies, primarily, naturally, originally, fundamentally, and merely in themselves, be not absolutely and essentially necessary: and this we have from that which is recorded by St. Mark, and none but him. St. Luke, and none but St. Luke, records the

[1] Matt. i. 19. [2] Mark vii. 33.

history of Mary and Joseph's losing of Christ[3]: in which we see, how good and holy persons may lose Christ; and how long! They had lost him, and were a whole day without missing him: a man may be without Christ, and his Spirit, and lie long in an ignorance and senselessness of that loss: and then, where did they lose him? Even in Jerusalem, in the holy city: even in this holy place, and now in this holy exercise, you lose Christ, if either any other respect than his glory, brought you hither; or your minds stray out of these walls, now you are here. But when they sought him, and sought him sorrowing, and sought him in the temple, then they found him: if in a holy sadness and penitence, you seek him here, in his house, in his ordinance, here he is always at home, here you may always find him. And this we have out of that which St. Luke reports, and none but he. St. John, and none but St. John[4], records the story of Christ's miraculous changing of water into wine, at the marriage in Cana: in which, we see, both that Christ honoured the state of marriage, with his personal presence, and also that he afforded his servants so plentiful a use of his creatures, as that he was pleased to come to a miraculous supply of wine, rather than they should want it. Some things are severally recorded by the several evangelists, as all these; and then some things are recorded by all four; as John Baptist's humility, and low valuation of himself, in respect of Christ; which he expresses in that phrase, *That he was not worthy to carry his shoes.* The Holy Ghost had a care, that this should be repeated to us by all four, that the best endeavours of God's best servants, are unprofitable, unavailable in themselves, otherwise than as God's gracious acceptation inanimates them. and as he puts his hand to that plough which they drive or draw, Now our text hath neither this singularity, nor this universality; it is neither in one only, nor in all the evangelists: but it hath (as they speak in the law) an interpretative universality, a presumptive universality: for that which hath a plurality of voices, is said to have all; and this text hath so; for three of the four evangelists have recorded this text: only St. John, who doth especially extend himself about the divine nature of Christ, pretermits it; but all the rest, who insist more upon his assuming

[3] Luke ii. 43.

[4] John ii. 11.

our nature, and working our salvation in that, the Holy Ghost hath recorded, and repeated this protestation of our Saviour's, *I came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Which words, being spoken by Christ, upon occasion of the Pharisees murmuring at his admitting of publicans and sinners to the table with him, at that feast which St. Matthew made him, at his house, soon after his calling to the apostleship, direct our consideratiou upon the whole story, and do, not afford but require, not admit but invite this distribution; that, first, we consider the occasion of the words, and then the words themselves: for of these twins is this text pregnant, and quick, and easily delivered. In the first, we shall see the pertinency of Christ's answer; and in the second, the doctrine thereof: in the first, how fit it was for them; in the other, how necessary for us: first, the historical part, which was occasional; and then the catechistical part, which is doctrinal. And in the first of these, the historical and occasional part, we shall see, first, that Christ by his personal presence justified feasting, somewhat more than was merely necessary, for society, and cheerful conversation: he justified feasting, and feasting in an apostle's house: though a churchman, and an exemplar man, he was not deprived of a plentiful use of God's creatures, nor of the cheerfulness of conversation. And then he justified feasting in the company of publicans and sinners; intimating therein, that we must not be in things of ordinary conversation, over-curious, over-inquisitive of other men's manners: for whatsoever their manners be, a good man need not take harm by them, and he may do good amongst them. And then lastly, we shall see the calumny that the Pharisees cast upon Christ for this, and the iniquity of that calumny, both in the manner, and in the matter thereof. And in these branches we shall determine that first, the historical, the occasional part: and in the second, the catechistical and doctrinal, (*I came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance*) we shall pass by these steps: first, we shall see the actions; *venit*, he came; that is, first, *venit actu:* whereas he came by promise, even in Paradise; and by frequent ratification, in all the prophets; now he is really, actually come; *venit*, he is come, we look for no other after him; we join no other, angels nor saints, with him: *venit*, he is actu-

ally come; and then, *venit sponte*, he is come freely, and of his goodwill; we assign, we imagine no cause in us, that should invite him to come, but humbly acknowledge all to have proceeded from his own goodness: and that is the action, he came. And then the errand, and purpose for which he came, is *vocare*, he came to call: it is not, *occurrere*, that he came to meet them, who were upon the way before; for no man had either disposition in himself, or faculty in himself, neither will nor power to rise and meet him, no nor so much as to wish that Christ would call him, till he did call him: he came not *occurrere*, to meet us; but yet he came not *cogere*, to compel us, to force us, but only *vocare*, to call us, by his word, and sacraments, and ordinances, and lead us so; and that is his errand, and purpose in coming. And from that, we shall come to the persons upon whom his coming work: where we have first a negative, a fearful thing in Christ's lips; and then an affirmative, a blessed seal in his mouth: first, an exclusive, a fearful banishment out of his ark; and then an inclusive, a blessed naturalization in his kingdom: *Non justos, I came to call, not the righteous, but sinners.* And then lastly, we have, not as before, his general intention and purpose, to call; but the particular effect and operation of this calling upon the godly, it brings them to repentance. Christ does not call us to a satisfaction of God's justice, by ourselves; that is impossible to us: it is not *ad satisfactionem;* but then it is not *ad gloriam*, he does not call us to an immediate possession of glory, without doing any thing before; but it is *Ad resipiscentiam; I came to call, not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.* And so have you the whole frame marked out, which we shall set up; and the whole compass designed, which we shall walk in: in which, though the pieces may seem many, yet they do so naturally flow out of one another, that they may easily enter into your understanding; and so naturally depend upon one another, that they may easily lay hold upon your memory.

First then, our first branch in the first part, is, that Christ justified feasting, festival and cheerful conversation. For, as St. Ambrose says, *frustra fecisset*, God, who made the world primarily for his own glory, had made light in vain, if he had made no creatures to see, and to be seen by that light, wherein he might

receive glory: so, *frustra fecisset*, God, who intended secondarily man's good in the creation, had made creatures to no purpose, if he had not allowed man a use, and an enjoying of those creatures. Our mythologists, who think they have conveyed a great deal of moral doctrine in their poetical fables, (and so indeed they have) had mistaken the matter much, when they make it one of the torments of hell, to stand in a fresh river, and not be permitted to drink; and amongst pleasant fruits, and not to be suffered to eat; as if God required such a forbearing, such an abstemiousness in man, as that being set to rule and govern the creatures, he might not use and enjoy them: privileges are lost, by abusing; but so they are, by not using too. Of those three opinions, which have all passed through good authors, whether, before the flood had impaired and corrupted the herbs and fruits of the earth, men did eat flesh or no; of which, the first is absolutely negative, both in matter of law, and in matter of fact, no man might, no man did; and the second is directly contrary to this, affirmative in both, all men might, all men did; and the third goes a middle way, it was always lawful, and all men might, but sober and temperate men did forbear, and not do it: of these three, though the latter have prevailed with those authors, and be the common opinion; yet the latter part of that latter opinion, would very hardly fall into proof, that all their sober and temperate men did forbear this eating of flesh, or any lawful use of God's creatures. God himself took his portion in this world so, in meat and drink, in his manifold sacrifices; and God himself gave himself in this world so, in bread and wine, in the blessed sacrament of his body and his blood: and the very joys of heaven after the resurrection, are conveyed to us also, in the marriage-supper of the Lamb. That *mensa laqueus*, which is in the Psalm[5], is a curse: *Let their table be made a snare*, let their plenty and prosperity be an occasion of sin to them, that is a malediction: but for that *mensa propositionum*[6], the table of shewbread, where those blessings which God had given to man, were brought again, and presented in his sight, upon that table; the loaves were great in quantity, and many in number, and often renewed: God gives plentifully, richly, and will be served so himself. In all those

[5] Psalm lxix. 22. [6] Numb. iv. 7.

festivals, amongst the Jews, which were of God's immediate institution, as the passover, and Pentecost, and the trumpets, and tabernacles, and the rest, you shall often meet in the Scriptures, these two phrases, *Humiliabitis animas;* and then, *Lætaberis coram Domino:* first, upon that day, *You shall humble your souls,* (that you have, Levit. xvi. 29, and very often) and then, upon that day, *You shall rejoice before the Lord;* (and that you have, Deut. xvi. 11, and very often besides.) Now some interpreters have applied these two phrases to the two days; That upon the eve we should humble our souls in fasting, and upon the day rejoice before the Lord in a festival cheerfulness: but both belong to the day itself; that first we should humble our souls, as we do now, in these holy convocations; and then return, and rejoice before the Lord, in a cheerful use of his creatures, ourselves, and then send out a portion to them that want, as it is expressly enjoined in that feast, Neh. viii. 10, and in that, Esther ix. 22, where their feasting is as literally commanded, as their giving to the poor. And besides those stationary and anniversary feastings, which were of God's immediate institution, and that feast which was of the church's institution after, in the time of the Maccabees, which was the *Encœnia*, The dedication of the temple; the Jews at this day, in their dispersion, observe a yearly feast, which they call *Festum lætitiæ*, The feast of rejoicing, in a festival of thankfulness to God, that he hath brought the year about, and afforded them the use of the law, another year. When Christ came to Jairus' house, and commanded away the music, and all the funeral solemnities, it was not because he disallowed those solemnities, but because he knew there was no funeral to be solemnized in that place, to which he came with an infallible purpose to raise that maid which was dead. Civil recreations, offices of society and mutual entertainment, and cheerful conversation; and such a use of God's creatures, as may testify him to be a God, not of the valleys only, but of the mountains too, not a God of necessity only, but of plenty too; Christ justified by his personal presence at a feast; which was our first: and then, at a feast in an apostle's house; which is our second circumstance.

The apostle then had a house, and means to keep a house, and to make occasional feasts in his house, though he had bound

himself to serve Christ in so near a place as an apostle. The profession of Christ's service, in the ministry, does not take from any man, the use of God's creatures, nor cheerfulness of conversation. As some of the other apostles are said to have followed Christ, *Relictis retibus, They left their nets, and followed him;* and yet upon occasion, they did at times return to their nets and fishing after that; for Christ found them at their nets, after his resurrection: so St. Matthew followed Christ, as St. Luke expresses it; *Relictis omnibus, He left all, and followed Christ*[7]*;* but not so absolutely all, as St. Basil seems to take it, *Adeo ut non solum lucra, sed et ipsa pericula contempserit*, That he did not only neglect the gain of his place, but the danger of displeasure by such a leaving of his place: for St. Matthew was a publican, and so a public officer, and an accountant to the state: but though he did so far leave all, as that nothing retarded him from an immediate following of Christ; yet, no doubt but he returned after, to the settling of his office, and the rectifying of his accounts. When God sees it necessary or behoveful for a man to leave all his worldly state, that he may follow him, God tells him so; he gives him such a measure of light by his Spirit, as lets him see, it is God's will; and then, to that man, that is a full commandment, and binds him to do it, and not only an evangelical counsel, as they call it, which leaves him at liberty, to do it, or leave it undone: Christ saw how much was necessary to that young man in the Gospel, and therefore to him he said, *Vade et vende, Go and sell all that thou hast, and then follow me:* and this was a commandment to that man, though it be not a general commandment to all; upon Matthew Christ laid no such commandment, but only said to him, *Sequere me, Follow me;* and he did so; but yet not so divest himself of his worldly estate, as that he had not a house, and means to keep a house, and that plentifully, after this. When Elijah used that holy fascination upon Elisha[8], (we may not, I think, call it a fascination; fascination, I think, hath never a good sense) but when Elijah used that holy charm and incantation upon him, to spread his mantle over him, and to draw him with that, as with a net, after him; yet after Elisha had thus received a character of orders, after this

[7] Luke v. 28. [8] 1 Kings xix. 19.

imposition of hands in the spreading of the mantle, after he had this new filiation, by which he was the son of the prophet, yet Elisha went home, and feasted his friends after this. So Matthew begun his apostleship with a feast; and though he in modesty forbear saying so, St. Luke, who reports the story, says that it was a great feast[9]. He begun with a great, but ended with a greater: for, (if we have St. Matthew's history rightly delivered to us) when he was at the greatest feast which this world can present, when he was receiving and administering the blessed sacrament, in that action, was he himself served up as a dish to the table of the Lamb, and added to the number of the martyrs then; and died for that Saviour of his, whose death for him, he did then celebrate. This then was *festum ablactationis; Abraham made a great feast, that day that Isaac was weaned*[10]: Here was St. Matthew weaned *ab uteribus mundi*, from the breasts of this world; and he made a feast, a feast that was a type of a type, a prevision of a vision, of that vision which St. Peter had after[11], of a sheet, with all kind of meats clean and unclean in it: for at this table was the clean and unspotted Lamb, Christ Jesus himself; and at the same table, those spotted and unclean goats, the publicans and sinners; which is our third, and next circumstance, he justified feasting, feasting in an apostle's house, feasting with publicans and sinners.

Is there then any conversation with notorious sinners justifiable, excusable? We see when St. Paul came to be of that high commission, to judge of notorious sinners, how he proceeded: he delivered Alexander and Hymenæus to Satan[12]; and there, surely, he did not mean that any man should keep them company. What was their fault? It was but one heretical point; a great one indeed; for they denied the resurrection; and for this, the apsstle (as it is also said there) sends them to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme: and may there not be thus much intimated in that, that a man may learn more blasphemy with some men, than with Satan himself? That may be true: but the sending and delivering to Satan, is the excluding of that man from the kingdom, that is, from the visible church of Christ, by

[9] Luke v. 29.
[10] Gen. xxi. 8.
[11] Acts x.
[12] 1 Tim. i. 20.

a just excommunication: for, all without the church, is Satan's jurisdiction. Of which fearful state, Gregory Nyssen speaks pathetically; *Si haberet oculos anima*, If thy soul had eyes, to see souls, *Ostenderem tibi, tibi segregato*, I would show thee, thee who hast wilfully incurred, and dost rebelliously continue under an excommunication rightly grounded, duly proceeded in, and justly denounced; I would show thee the picture of a man burning in hell, for that is thy picture, says that father, to that man; *Non episcopalis arrogantiæ existimes*, says he, Think it not a passionate act of an insolent bishop; *Cœpit in lege, confirmatur in gratia*, God began it in the law, and confirmed it in the Gospel; and where it is justly grounded, and duly proceeded in, it is a fearful thing to be delivered over to Satan by excommunication; and St. Paul is so far from conversing with an heretic in one point, as that he proceeds so far with him, as to deliver him to Satan.

Nay, for a fault much less than this, not opposed against God, as heresy, but against natural honesty, the apostle proceeds as far, in incest; *Gather you*, says he, *with my spirit, and the power of the Lord Jesus, to deliver that incestuous man to Satan*[13]. Nay, in less faults than that, he forbids conversation; *If a fornicator, if a drunkard, if a covetous person, with him eat not*[14]. Nay; for that which is less than these, he is as severe; *We command ye, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*[15]. Where Calvin thinks, (and, I think, aright, and many others must think so too; for a Jesuit[16] thinks so, as well as Calvin) that the apostle by the word disorderly, does not mean persons that live in any course of notorious sin; but by disorderly, he means *ignavos, inutiles*, idle and unprofitable persons; persons of no use to the church, or to the state: that whereas this is *ordo divinus*, the order that God hath established in this world, that every man should embrace a calling, and walk therein; they who do not so, pervert God's order: and they are St. Paul's disorderly persons.

This then being so, that the Holy Ghost by St. Paul separates

[13] 1 Cor. v. 5.
[14] 1 Cor. v. 11.
[15] 2 Thes. iii. 6.
[16] Cornelius á Lapide.

not only from all spiritual communion, but from all civil conversation, all notorious sinners, and disorderly persons, how descends Christ to this facility, and easiness of conversation with publicans and sinners? For, (to speak a word by the way, of the office of a publican) though customs, and tributes, and impositions were due to the kings of Jewry, due in natural right, and due in legal right, fixed and established by that law in Samuel[17]; and so the farmers of those customs, and collectors of those tributes, in that respect not to be blamed, or ill thought of; and though in the Roman state, (under whose government, at this time the Jews were) the office of a publican were an honourable office, for so that great statesman and orator tells us, *Flos equitum Romanorum, ornamentum civitatis, firmamentum reipublicæ*[18]. Men of the best families and extraction in the state, men of the best credit and reputation in the state, men of the best revenues and possession in the state, were publicans; yet when the Romans governed Jewry as a province, and that these honourable Roman publicans forbore to execute that office in those remote parts, and making under-farmers there, for the better advancing of that service, employed the Jews themselves, who best understood the ways and the persons: these Jews became more cruel and heavy to their brethren, in these exactions, than any strangers: and so, and justly, the most odious persons amongst them: and then why would Christ afford this conversation to these, and such as these, to publicans and sinners? Christ was in himself a dispensation upon any law, because he was the law-maker. But here he proceeded not in that capacity; he took no benefit of any dispensation; he fulfilled the intention and purpose of the law; for the laws therefore forbade conversation with sinners, lest a man should take infection by such conversation: so the Jews were forbidden to eat with the Gentiles[19]; but it was, lest in eating with the Gentiles, they might eat of things sacrificed to idols: so they were forbidden conversation with leprous persons, lest by such conversation the disease should be propagated[20]; but where the danger of infection ceased, all conversation might be open; and Christ was always far enough from taking any infection, by

[17] 1 Sam. viii. 15.
[18] Cicero.
[19] Exod. xxxiv.
[20] Numb. v.

any conversation with any sinner. He might apply himself to them, because he could take no harm by them; but he did it especially, that he might do good upon them. Some forbear the company of sinners, out of a singularity, and pride in their own purity, and say, with those in Esay, *Stand by thyself, come not near me, for I am holier than thou*[21]. But, *Bonus non est, qui malos tolerare non potest*, says St. Augustine upon those words, *Lilium inter spinas*[22], That Christ was a lily, though he grew amongst thorns. A lily is not the less a lily, nor the worse, nor the darker a lily, because it grows amongst thorns. That man is not so good as he should be, that cannot maintain his own integrity, and continue good; or that cannot maintain his charity, though others continue bad. It was St. Paul's way, *I am made all things to all men, that I might save some*[23]. And in that place, which we mentioned before, where the apostle names the persons, whom we are to forbear, amongst them, he names idolators[24]; and, as he does the rest, he calls even those idolators, brethren; *If any that is called a brother, be an idolator*, &c. In cases where we are safe from danger of infection, (and it lies much in ourselves, to save ourselves from infection) even some kind of idolators, are left by St. Paul under the name of brethren; and some brotherly, and neighbourly, and pious offices, belong to them, for all that. These faults must arm me to avoid all danger from them, but not extinguish all charity towards them. And therefore it was an unjust calumny in the Pharisees, to impute this for a fault to Christ, that he applied himself to these men; which is the next and last circumstance in this first part, the calumny of these Pharisees.

Now in the manner of this calumny, there was a great deal of iniquity, and a great deal in the matter: for, for the manner; that which they say of Christ, they say not to Christ himself, but they whisper it to his servants, to his disciples. A legal and juridical accusation, is justifiable, maintainable, because it is the proper way for remedy: a private reprehension done with discretion, and moderation, should be acceptable too; but a privy whispering is always pharisaical. The devil himself, though

[21] Isaiah LXV. 5. [22] Cant. ii. 2.
[23] 1 Cor. ix. 22. [24] 1 Cor. v. 11.

he be a lion, yet he is a roaring lion; a man may hear him: but for a privy whisper, we shall only hear of him. And in their plot there was more mischief; for, when Christ's disciples plucked ears of corn, upon the Sabbath[25], the Pharisees said nothing to those disciples, but they come to their master, to Christ, and they tell him of it: here, when Christ eats and drinks with these sinners, they never say anything to Christ himself, but they go to his servants, and they tell them of it. By privy whisperings and calumnies, they would aliene Christ from his disciples, and his disciples from him; the king from his subjects by some tales, and the subject from the king by other: and they took this for the shortest way to disgrace both their preaching, to discredit both their lives; to defame Christ for a wine-bibber, and a loose companion, and to defame his disciples for profane men, and Sabbath-breakers: for, *Cujus vita despicitur, restat ut ejus predicatio contemnatur*, is an infallible inference and consequence made by St. Gregory; discredit a man's life, and you disgrace his preaching: lay imputations upon the person, and that will evacuate and frustrate all his preaching; for whether it be in the corruption of our nature, or whether it be in the nature of the thing itself, so it is, if I believe the preacher to be an ill man, I shall not be much the better for his good sermons.

Thus they were injurious in the manner of their calumny; they were so too in the matter, to calumniate him therefore, because he applied himself to sinners. The wise man in Ecclesiasticus institutes his mediation thus[26]: *There is one that hath great need of help, full of poverty, yet the eye of the Lord looked upon him for good, and set him up from his low estate, so that many that saw it, marvelled at it.* Many marvelled, but none reproached the Lord, chid the Lord, calumniated the Lord, for doing so. And if the Lord will look upon a sinner, and raise that bedrid man; if he will look with that eye, that pierces deeper than the eye of heaven, the sun, (and yet with a look of that eye, the womb of the earth conceives) if he will look with that eye, that conveys more warmth than the eye of the ostrich, (and yet with a look of that eye, that bird is said to hatch her

[25] Matt. xii. [26] Ecclus. xi. 12.

young ones, without sitting) that eye that melted Peter into water, and made him flow towards Christ; and rarefied Matthew into air, and made him flee towards Christ; if that eye vouchsafe to look upon a publican, and redeem a Goshen out of an Egypt, hatch a soul out of a carnal man, produce a saint out of a sinner, shall we marvel at the matter? marvel so, as to doubt God's power? shall anything be impossible to God? or shall we marvel at the manner, at any way by which Christ shall be pleased to convey his mercy? *Miraris eum peccatorum vinum bibere, qui pro peccatoribus sanguinem fudit*[27]? Shall we wonder that Christ would live with sinners, who was content to die for sinners? Wonder that he would eat the bread and wine of sinners, that gave sinners his own flesh to eat, and his own blood to drink? Or if we do wonder at this, (as, indeed, nothing is more wonderful) yet let us not calumniate, let us not misinterpret any way, that he shall be pleased to take, to derive his mercy to any man: but (to use Clement of Alexandria's comparison) as we tread upon many herbs negligently in the field, but when we see them in an apothecary's shop, we begin to think that there is some virtue in them; so howsoever we have a perfect hatred, and a religious despite against a sinner, as a sinner; yet if Christ Jesus shall have been pleased to have come to his door, and to have stood, and knocked, and entered, and supped, and brought his dish, and made himself that dish, and sealed a reconciliation to that sinner, in admitting him to that table, to that communion, let us forget the name of publican, the vices of any particular profession; and forget the name of sinner, the history of any man's former life; and be glad to meet that man now in the arms, and to grow up with that man now in the bowels of Christ Jesus; since Christ doth now begin to make that man his, but now declares to us, that he hath been his, from all eternity: for in the book of life, the name of Mary Magdalene was as soon recorded, for all her incontinency, as the name of the blessed Virgin, for all her integrity; and the name of St. Paul who drew his sword against Christ, as soon as St. Peter, who drew his in defence of him: for the book of life was not written successively, word after word, line after line, but deli-

[27] Chrysologus.

vered as a print, altogether. There the greatest sinners were as soon recorded, as the most righteous; and here Christ comes to call, not the righteous at all, but only sinners to repentance. And so we have done with those pieces which constitute our first part; Christ by his personal presence justified feasting, and feasting in an apostle's house, and feasting with publicans and sinners, though the Pharisees calumniated him, maliciously in the manner, injuriously in the matter; and we pass to our other part; from the historical and occasional, to the catechistical, the doctrinal part.

The other part, the occasion, the connexion was of the text; and we cannot say properly that this part, the answer is in the text; for, indeed, the text is in it: the text itself is but a piece of that answer, which Christ gives to these calumniators. First, Christ does afford an answer even to calumniators; for that is very often necessary: not only because otherwise a calumniator would triumph, but because otherwise a calumny would not appear to be a calumny. A calumny is fixed upon the fame of a good man; he in a holy scorn, and religious negligence, pretermits it; and after, long after, the generation of those vipers come to say, In all this time, who ever denied it? A seasonable and a sober answer interrupts the prescription of a calumny, discontinues the continual claim of a calumny, disappoints and avoids that fine which the calumny levied, to bar all posterity, if no man arise to make an answer. Truly, there are some passages in the legend of Pope Joan, which I am not very apt to believe; yet, it is showed evidence, that in so many hundreds of years, six or seven, no man in that church should say anything against it: I would they had been pleased to have said something, somewhat sooner: for if there were slander mingled in the story, (and if there be, it must be their own authors that have mingled it) yet slander itself should not be neglected. Christ does not neglect it; he justifies his conversation with these sinners: and he gives answers proportionable to the men, with whom he dealt. First, because the Pharisees pretended a knowledge and zeal to the Scriptures, he answers out of the Scriptures, out of the prophet, *Misericordiam volo, Mercy is better than sacrifice*[28]; and an

[28] Hosea vi. 6.

evangelical desire to do good upon sinners, better than a legal inhibition to come near them. And Christ seems to have been so full of this saying of Hosea, as that he says it here, where the Pharisees calumniate him to his disciples; and when they calumniate the disciples about the Sabbath, he says it there too. He answers out of Scriptures, because they pretend a zeal to them; and then because the Pharisees were learned, and rational men, he answers out of reason too, *The whole have no need of the physician:* I come in the quality of a physician, and therefore apply myself to the sick. For, we read of many blind and lame, and deaf and dumb, and dead persons, that came or were brought to Christ to be recovered; but we never read of any man, who being then in a good state of health, came to Christ to desire that he might be preserved in that state: the whole never think of a physician; and therefore Christ, who came in that quality, applied himself to them that needed. And that he might give full satisfaction, even to calumniators, every way, as he answered them out of Scriptures, and out of reason; so because the Pharisees were statesmen too, and led by precedents and records, he answers out of the tenour and letter of his commission and instructions, (which is that part of his answer that falls most directly into our text) *Veni vocare, I came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

First then, *venit*, he came, he is come: *venit actu;* he came in promise, often ratified before: now there is no more room for John Baptist's question, *Tune ille, Art thou he that should come, or must we look for another?* For another coming of the same Messias, we do look, but not for another Messias; we look for none after him, no post-Messias; we join none, saints nor angels, with him, no sub-Messias, no vice-Messias. The Jews may as well call the history of the flood prophetical, and ask when the world shall be drowned according to that prophecy; or the history of their deliverance from Babylon prophetical, and ask when they shall return from thence to Jerusalem, according to that prophecy, as seek for a Messias now amongst their prophets, so long after all things being performed in Christ, which were prophesied of the Messias; Christ hath so fully made prophecy history.

Venit actu, He is really, personally, actually come; and then *venit sponte*, he is come freely, and of his own mere goodness: how freely? Come, and not sent? Yes, he was sent: *God so loved the world, as that he gave his only begotten Son for it;* there was enough done to magnify the mercy of the Father, in sending him. How freely then? Come and not brought? Yes, he was brought: *The Holy Ghost overshadowed the blessed Virgin*, and so he was conceived: there was enough done to magnify the goodness of the Holy Ghost in bringing him. He came to his prison, he abhorred not the Virgin's womb; and not without a *mittimus;* he was sent: he came to the execution; and not without a desire of reprieve, in his *transeat calix*, *If it be possible, let this cup pass from me;* and yet *venit sponte*, he came freely, voluntarily, of his own goodness. No more than he could have been left out at the creation, and the world made without him, could he have been sent into this world, without his own hand to the warrant, or have been left out at the decree of his sending. As when he was come, no man could have taken away his soul, if he had not laid it down; so, (if we might so speak) no God, no person in the Trinity, could have sent him, if he had not been willing to come. *Venit actu*, he is come; there is our comfort: *venit sponte*, he came freely; there is his goodness. And so you have the action, *venit*, he came.

The next is his errand, his purpose, what he came to do, *Venit vocare, He came to call.* It is not *vocatus*, that Christ came, when we called upon him to come: man had no power, no will, no not a faculty to wish that Christ would have come, till Christ did come, and call him. For, it is not *veni occurrere*, that Christ came to meet them who were upon the way before: man had no pre-disposition in nature, to invite God to come to him. *Quid peto, ut venias in me, qui non essem si non esses in me*[29]? How should I pray at first, that God would come into me, whereas I could not only not have the spirit of prayer, but not the spirit of life, and being, except God were in me already? Where was I, when Christ called me out of my rags, nay out of my ordure, and washed me in the sacramental water of baptism, and made me a Christian so? Where was I, when in the loins of my sinful

[29] Augustine.

parents, and in the unclean act of generation, Christ called me into the covenant, and made me the child of Christian parents? Could I call upon him, to do either of these for me? Or if I may seem to have made any step towards baptism, because I was within the covenant; or towards the covenant, because I was of Christian parents: yet where was I, when God called me, when I was not, as though I had been, in the eternal decree of my election? What said I for myself, or what said any other for me then, when neither I, nor they had any being? God *is found of them that sought him not: Non venit occurrere*, He came not to meet them who were, of themselves, set out before.

But then, *non venit cogere*, he came not to force and compel them, who would not be brought into the way: Christ saves no man against his will. There is a word crept into the later school, that deludes many a man; they call it irresistibility; and they would have it mean, that when God would have a man, he will lay hold upon him, by such a power of grace, as no perverseness of that man, can possibly resist. There is some truth in the thing, soberly understood: for the grace of God is more powerful than any resistance of any man or devil. But leave the word, where it was hatched, in the school, and bring it not home, not into practice: for he that stays his conversion upon that, God, at one time or other, will lay hold upon me by such a power of grace, as I shall not be able to resist, may stay, till Christ come again, to *preach to the spirits that are in prison*[30]. Christ beats his drum, but he does not press men; Christ is served with voluntaries. There is a *compelle intrare*[31], a forcing of men to come in, and fill the house, and furnish the supper: but that was an extraordinary commission, and in a case of necessity: our ordinary commission, is, *Ite, prædicate;* Go, and preach the Gospel, and bring men in so: it is not, *compelle intrare*, force men to come in: it is not, draw the sword, kindle the fire, wind up the rack: for, when it was come to that, that men were forced to come in, (as that parabolical story is reported in this evangelist) *The house was filled*[32], and the supper was furnished, (the church was filled, and the communion-table frequented) but it was with

[30] 1 Pet. iii. 19. [31] Luke xiv. 23. [32] Matt. xxii. 10.

good and bad too: for men that are forced to come hither, they are not much the better in themselves, nor we much the better assured of their religion, for that: force and violence, pecuniary and bloody laws, are not the right way to bring men to religion, in cases where there is nothing in consideration, but religion merely. It is true, there is a *compellite manere*, that hath all justice in it; when men have been baptized, and bred in a church, and embraced the profession of a religion, so as that their allegiance is complicated with their religion, then it is proper by such laws to compel them to remain and continue in that religion; for in the apostacy, and defection of such men, the state hath a detriment, as well as the church; and therefore the temporal sword may be drawn as well as the spiritual; which is the case between those of the Romish persuasion, and us: their laws work directly upon our religion; they draw blood merely for that, ours work directly upon their allegiance, and punish only where pretence of religion colours a defection in allegiance. But Christ's end being merely spiritual, to constitute a church, *non venit occurrere*, as he came not to meet man, man was not so forward; so he came not to compel man, to deal upon any that was so backward; for, *venit vocare*, he came to call.

Now, this calling, implies a voice, as well as a word; it is by the Word; but not by the Word read at home, though that be a pious exercise: nor by the Word submitted to private interpretation; but by the Word preached, according to his ordinance, and under the great seal, of his blessing upon his ordinance. So that preaching is this calling; and therefore, as if Christ do appear to any man, in the power of a miracle, or in a private inspiration, yet he appears but in weakness, as in an infancy, till he speak, till he bring a man to the hearing of his voice, in a settled church, and in the ordinance of preaching: so how long soever Christ have dwelt in any state, or any church, if he grow speechless, he is departing; if there be a discontinuing, or slackening of preaching, there is a danger of losing Christ. Adam was not made in paradise, but brought thither, called thither: the sons of Adam are not born in the church, but called thither by baptism; *Non nascimur sed re-nascimur Christiani*[23]; No man is born a

[23] Augustine.

Christian, but called into that state by regeneration. And therefore, as the consummation of our happiness is in that, that we shall be called at last, into the kingdom of glory, in the *Venite benedicti, Come ye blessed, and enter into your Master's joy:* so is it a blessed inchoation of that happiness, that we are called into the kingdom of grace, and made partakers of his word and sacraments, and other ordinances by the way. And so you have his action, and errand, He came, and, came to call.

The next, is the persons upon whom he works, whom he calls; where we have first the negative, the exclusive, *non justos*, not the righteous. In which, Gregory Nyssene, is so tender, so compassionate, so loth, that this negative should fall upon any man, that any man should be excluded from possibility of salvation, as that he carries it wholly upon angels: Christ took not the nature of angels, Christ came not to call angels: but this exclusion falls upon men; What men? Upon the righteous: Who are they? We have two expositions, both of Jesuits, both good; I mean the expositions, not the Jesuits: they differ somewhat; for, though the Jesuits agree well enough, too well, in state-business, in courts, (how kings shall be deposed, and how massacred; how kingdoms shall be deluded with dispensations, and how invaded with forces, they agree well enough) yet in schools, and in expositions, they differ, as well as others. The first, Maldonat, he says, that as in that parable, where Christ says, that *the good shepherd left the ninety-nine sheep, that had kept their pastures, and went to seek that one, which was strayed*[34], he did not mean, that there is but one sheep of a hundred, that does go astray; but that if that were the case, he would go to seek that one: so when Christ says here, *He came not to call the righteous*, he does not mean that there were any righteous; but if the world were full of righteous men, so that he might make up the number of his elect, and fill up the rooms of the fallen angels, out of them; yet he would come to call sinners too. The other Jesuite Barradas, (not altogether Barrabas) he says, Christ said, *Non justos*, Not the righteous, because if there had been any righteous, he needed not to have come: according to that of St. Augustine, *Si homo non periisset, Filius hominis non venisset;* If man had not fallen, and

[34] Matt. xviii. 12.

lain irrecoverably under that fall, the Son of God had not come to suffer the shame, and the pain of the cross: so that they differ but in this; If there had been any righteous, Christ needed not to have come; and though there had been righteous men, yet he would have come; but in this, They, and all agree, that there were none righteous. None? Why, *whom he predestinated, those he called*[35]; and were not they whom he predestinated, and elected to salvation, righteous? Even the elect themselves have not a constant righteousness in this world: such a righteousness, as does always denominate them, so, as that they can always say to their own conscience, or so as the church can always say of them, This is a righteous man: No, nor so, as that God, who looks upon a sinner with the eyes of the church, and considers a sinner, with the heart and sense of the church, and speaks of him with the tongue of the church, can say of him, then, when he is under unrepented sin, This man is righteous: howsoever, if he look upon him, in that decree which lies in his bosom, and by which he hath infallibly ordained him to salvation, he may say so. No man here, though elect, hath an equal and constant righteousness; nay, no man hath any such righteousness of his own, as can save him, for howsoever it be made his, by that application, or imputation, yet the righteousness that saves him, is the very righteousness of Christ himself. St. Hilary's question then, hath a full answer, *Erant quibus non erat necesse ut veniret?* Were there any that needed not Christ's coming? No; there were none; Who then are these righteous? We answer with St. Chrysostom, and St. Hierome, and St. Ambrose, and all the stream of the fathers; they are *justi sua justitia*, those who thought themselves righteous; those who relied upon their own righteousness; those who mistook their righteousness, as the Laodiceans did their riches; they said, *They were rich, and had need of nothing; and they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*[36]. So, these men, *being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish a righteousness of their own, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God*[37]; that is, depend wholly upon the righteousness of Christ. He calls it *suam*, their

[35] Rom. viii. 30. [36] Rev. iii. 17. [37] Rom. x. 3.

righteousness, because they thought they had a righteousness of their own; either in the faculties of nature, or in the exaltation of those faculties by the help of the law: and he calls it *suam*, their righteousness, because they thought none had it but they. And upon this Pelagian righteousness, it thought nature sufficient without grace; or upon this righteousness of the Cathari, the Puritans in the primitive church, that thought the grace which they had received sufficient, and that upon that stock they were safe, and become impeccable, and therefore left out of the Lord's Prayer, that petition, *Dimitte nobis*, Forgive us our trespasses; upon this Pelagian righteousness, and this Puritan righteousness, Christ does not work. He left out the righteous, not that there were any such, but such as thought themselves so; and he took in sinners, not all effectually, that were simply so, but such as the sense of their sins, and the miserable state that that occasioned, brought to an acknowledgment, that they were so; *Non justos, sed peccatores.*

Here then enters our affirmative, our inclusive, who are called; *peccatores:* for here no man asks the question of the former branch: there we asked, whether there were any righteous? and we found none; here we ask not whether there were any sinners, for we can find no others, no not one. He came to call sinners, and only sinners; that is, only in that capacity, in that contemplation, as they were sinners; for of that vain and frivolous opinion, that got in, and got hold in the later school, that Christ had come in the flesh, though Adam had stood in his innocence; that though man had not needed Christ as a Redeemer, yet he would have come to have given to man the greatest dignity that nature might possibly receive, which was to be united to the Divine Nature: of this opinion, one of those Jesuits whom we named before, Maldonat, who oftentimes making his use of whole sentences of Calvin's, says in the end, This is a good exposition, but that he is an heretic that makes it. He says also of this opinion, that Christ had come, though Adam had stood; This is an ill opinion, but that they are Catholics that have said it. He came for sinners; for sinners only; else he had not come: and then he came for all kind of sinners: for, upon those words of our

Saviour's, to the high priests and Pharisees, *Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you*[38], good expositors note, that in those two notations, publicans and harlots, many sorts of sinners are implied: in the name of publicans, all such, as by their very profession and calling, are led into temptations, and occasions of sin, to which some callings are naturally more exposed than other, such as can hardly be exercised without sin; and then in the name of harlots, and prostitute women, such as cannot at all be exercised without sin; whose very profession is sin: and yet for these, for the worst of these, for all these, there is a voice gone out, Christ is come to call sinners, only sinners, all sinners. Comes he then thus for sinners? What an advantage had St. Paul then, to be of this *quorum*, and the first of them; *Quorum ego maximus*, That when Christ came to save sinners, he should be the greatest sinner, the first in that election? If we should live to see that acted, which Christ speaks of at the last day, *Two in the field, the one taken, the other left*[39], should we not wonder to see him that were left, lay hold upon him that were taken, and offer to go to heaven before him, therefore, because he had killed more men in the field, or robbed more men upon the highway, or supplanted more in the court, or oppressed more in the city? to make the multiplicity of his sins, his title to heaven? Or, *two women grinding at the mill, one taken, the other left;* to see her that was left, offer to precede the other into heaven, therefore, because she had prostituted herself to more men, than the other had done? Is this St. Paul's *quorum*, his dignity, his prudency; I must be saved, because I am the greatest sinner? God forbid: God forbid we should presume upon salvation, because we are sinners; or sin therefore, that we may be surer of salvation. St. Paul's title to heaven, was, not that he was *primus peccator*, but *primus confessor*, that he first accused himself, and came to a sense of his miserable estate; for that implies that which is our last word, and the effect of Christ's calling, that whomsoever he calls, or how, or whensoever, it is *ad resipiscentiam*, to repentance. It is not *ad satisfactionem*, Christ does not come to call us, to make satisfaction to the justice of God: he called us to a heavy, to an impossible account, if he called us to that. If the death of

[38] Matt. xxi. 31. [39] Matt. xxiv. 41.

Christ Jesus himself, be but a satisfaction for the punishment for my sins, (for nothing less than that could have made that satisfaction) what can a temporary purgatory of days or hours do towards a satisfaction? And if the torments of purgatory itself, sustained by myself, be nothing towards a satisfaction, what can an evening's fast, or an Ave Marie, from my executor, or my assignee, after I am dead, do towards such a satisfaction? Canst thou satisfy the justice of God, for all that blood which thou hast drawn from his Son, in thy blasphemous oaths and execrations; or for all that blood of his, which thou hast spilt upon the ground, upon the dunghill, in thy unworthy receiving the sacrament? Canst thou satisfy his justice, for having made his blessings the occasions, and the instruments of thy sins; or for dilapidations of his temple, in having destroyed thine own body by thine incontinency, and making that, the same flesh with a harlot? *If he will contend with thee, thou canst not answer him one of a thousand*[40]: nay, a thousand men could not answer one sin of one man.

It is not then *ad satisfactionem;* but it is not *ad gloriam* neither. Christ does not call us to an immediate possession of glory, without doing anything between. Our glorification was in his intention, as soon as our election: in God who sees all things at once, both entered at once; but in the execution of his decrees here, God carries us by steps; he calls us to repentance. The farmers of this imaginary satisfaction, they that sell it at their own price, in their indulgences, have done well, to leave out this repentance, both in this text in St. Matthew, and where the same is related by St. Mark. In both places, they tell us, that Christ came to cast sinners, but they do not tell us to what; as though it might be enough to call them to their market, to buy their indulgences. The Holy Ghost tells us; it is to repentance: Are ye to learn now what that is? He that cannot define repentance, that he cannot spell it, may have it; and he that hath written whole books, great volumes of it, may be without it. In one word, (one word will not do it, but in two words) it is *aversio*, and *conversio;* it is a turning from our sins, and a returning to our God. It is both: for in our age, in our sickness, in any

[40] Job ix. 9.

impotency towards a sin, in any satiety of a sin, we turn from our sin, but we turn not to God; we turn to a sinful delight in the memory of our sins, and a sinful desire that we might continue in them. So also in a storm at sea, in any imminent calamity, at land, we turn to God, to a Lord, Lord; but at the next calm, and at the next deliverance, we turn to our sin again. He only is the true Israelite, the true penitent, that hath Nathaniel's mark, *In quo non est dolus, In whom there is no deceit:* for, to sin, and think God sees it not, because we confess it not; to confess it as sin, and yet continue the practice of it; to discontinue the practice of it, and continue the possession of that, which was got by that sin; all this is deceit, and destroys, evacuates, annihilates all repentance.

To recollect all, and to end all: Christ justifies feasting; he feasts you with himself: and feasting in an apostle's house, in his own house; he feasts you often here: and he admits publicans to this feast, men whose full and open life, in court, must necessarily expose them, to many hazards of sin: and the Pharisees, our adversaries, calumniate us for this; they say we admit men too easily to the sacrament; without confession, without contrition, without satisfaction. God in heaven knows we do not; less, much less than they. For confession, we require public confession in the congregation: and in time of sickness, upon the death-bed, we enjoin private and particular confession, if the conscience be oppressed: and if any man do think, that that which is necessary for him, upon his death-bed, is necessary, every time he comes to the communion, and so come to such a confession, if anything lie upon him, as often as he comes to the communion, we blame not, we dissuade not, we discounsel not, that tenderness of conscience, and that safe proceeding in that good soul. For contrition, we require such a contrition as amounts to a full detestation of the sin, and a full resolution, not to relapse into that sin: and this they do not in the Roman church, where they have suppled and mollified their contrition into an attrition. For satisfaction, we require such a satisfaction as man can make to man, in goods or fame: and for the satisfaction due to God, we require that every man, with a sober and modest, but yet with a confident and infallible assurance believe,

the satisfaction given to God, by Christ, for all mankind, to have been given and accepted for him in particular. This Christ, with joy and thanksgiving we acknowledge to be come; to be come actually; we expect no other after him, we join no other to him: and come freely, without any necessity imposed by any above him, and without any invitation from us here: come, not to meet us, who were not able to rise, without him; but yet not to force us, to save us against our wills, but come to call us, by his ordinances in his church; us, not as we pretend any righteousness of our own, but as we confess ourselves to be sinners, and sinners led by this call, to repentance; which repentance, is an everlasting divorce from our beloved sin, and an everlasting marriage and superinduction of our ever-living God.

SERMON CXL.

PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, APRIL 2, 1620.

ECCLESIASTES v. 13, 14.

There is an evil sickness that I have seen under the sun: riches reserved to the owners thereof, for their evil. And these riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and in his hand is nothing.

THE kingdom of heaven is a feast; to get you a stomach to that, we have preached abstinence. The kingdom of heaven is a treasure too, and to make you capable of that, we would bring you to a just valuation of this world. He that hath his hands full of dirt, cannot take up amber; if they be full of counters, he cannot take up gold. This is the book, which St. Hierome chose to expound to Blesilla at Rome, when his purpose was to draw her to heaven, by making her to understand this world; it was the book fittest for that particular way: and it is the book which St. Ambrose calls *Bonum ad omnia magistrum;* A good master to correct us in this world, a good master to direct us to the next. For though Solomon had asked at God's hand only the wisdom fit for government, yet since he had bent his wishes upon so good a thing as wisdom, and in his wishes, even of the best thing, had

been so moderate, God abounded in his grant, and gave him all kinds, natural and civil, and heavenly wisdom. And therefore when the fathers and the later authors in the Roman church, exercise their considerations, whether Solomon were wiser than Adam, than Moses, than the prophets, than the apostles[1], they needed not to have been so tender, as to except only the Virgin Mary, for though she had such a fulness of heavenly wisdom, as brought her to rest in his bosom, in heaven, who had rested in hers upon earth, yet she was never proposed for an example of natural, or of civil knowledge. Solomon was of all; and therefore St. Austin says of him; *Prophetavit in omnibus libris suis*, Solomon prophesied in all his books; and though in this book his principal scope be moral, and practic wisdom, yet in this there are also mysteries, and prophecies, and many places concerning our eternal happiness, after this life.

But because there is no third object for man's love; this world, and the next, are all that he can consider, as he hath but two eyes, so he hath but two objects, and then *Primus actus voluntatis est amor*[2], Man's love is never idle, that is ever directed upon something, if our love might be drawn from this world, Solomon thought that a direct way to convey that upon the next: and therefore consider Solomon's method, and wisdom in pursuing this way: because all the world together, hath amazing greatness, and an amazing glory in it, for the order and harmony, and continuance of it (for if a man have many manors, he thinks himself a great lord, and if a man have many lords under him, he is a great king, and if he have kings under him, he is a great emperor: and yet what profit were it, to get all the world and lose thy soul) therefore Solomon shakes the world in pieces, he dissects it, and cuts it up before thee, that so thou mayest the better see how poor a thing, that particular is, whatsoever it be, that thou settest thy love upon in this world. He threads a string of the best stones, of the best jewels in this world, knowledge in the first chapter, delicacies in the second, long life in the third, ambition, riches, fame, strength in the rest, and then he shows you an *ire*, a flaw, a cloud in all these stones; he lays this infancy upon them all, vanity, and vexation of spirit.

[1] Augustine. [2] Aquinas.

Which two words, vanity and vexation, because they go through all, to everything Solomon applies one of them, they are the inseparable leaven, that sours all, and therefore are intended as well of this text, as of the other text, we shall by the way make a little stop, upon those two words; first, How could the wisdom of Solomon and of the Holy Ghost, avile and abase this world more, than by this annihilating of that in the name of vanity, for what is that? It is not enough to recite a distinction; it is so absolutely nothing, as that we cannot tell you, what it is. Let St. Bernard do it; *Vanum est, quod nec confert plenitudinem continenti;* For who amongst you hath not room for another bag, or amongst us for another benefice? *Nec fulcimentum innitenti*, For who stands fast upon that, which is not fast itself? and the world passeth, and the lusts thereof; *Nec fructum laboranti*, For you have sown much, and bring in little, *Ye eat, but have not enough, ye drink, but are not filled, ye are clothed, but wax not warm, and he that earneth wages, puts it into a bag with holes*[3], Midsummer runs out at Michaelmas, and at the year's end he hath nothing.

And such a vanity is this world, lest it were not enough, to call it vanity alone, simply vanity, though that language in which Solomon, and the Holy Ghost spoke, have no degrees of comparison, no superlative, (they cannot say *Vanissimum*, The greatest vanity,) yet Solomon hath found a way to express the height of it, another way conformable to that language, when he calls it, *Vanitatem vanitatum*, for so doth it; *Canticum canticorum*, The Song of songs, *Deus deorum*, The God of gods, *Dominus dominantium*, The Lord of lords; *Cœli cœlorum*, The Heaven of heavens, always signify the superlative, and highest degree of those things; vanity of vanities is the deepest vanity, the emptiest vanity, the veriest vanity that can be conceived. St. Augustine apprehended somewhat more in it, but upon a mistaking; for accustoming himself to a Latin copy of the Scriptures, and so lighting upon copies, that had been miswritten, he reads that, *Vanitas vanitantum:* O the vanity of those men that delight in vanity; he puts this lowness, this annihilation not only in the thing, but in the men themselves too. And so certainly

[3] Hagg. i. 16.

he might safely do; (for though, as he says, in his Retractations, his copies misled him,) yet that which he collected even by that error, was true, they that trust in vain things are as vain, as the things themselves. If St. Augustine had not his warrant to say so from Solomon here, yet he had it from his father before, who did not stop at that, when he had said man is like to vanity, but proceeds farther; surely that is without all contradiction every man, that is without all exception; in his best state, that is, without any declination, is altogether vanity[4]. Let no man grudge to acknowledge it of himself; the second man that ever was begot and born into this world, (and then there was world enough before him to make him great) and the first good man, had his name from vanity; Cain, the first man, had his name from possession; but the second, Abel, had his name from vacuity, from vanity, from vanishing; for it is the very word, that Solomon uses here still for vanity. Because his parents repose no confidence in Abel, or they thought that Cain was the Messias, they called him vanity. Because God knew that Abel had no long term in this world, he directed them, he suffered them to call him vanity. But therefore principally was he, and so may we, be content with the name of vanity, that so acknowledging ourselves to be but vanity, we may turn, for all our being, and all our well-being, for our essence, and existence, and subsistence, upon God in whom only we live and move and have our being; for take us at our best, make every one an Abel, and yet that is but *evanescentia in nihilum*, a vanishing, an evaporating. When the prophets are said to speak the motions, and notions, the visions of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord[5], then because that was indeed nothing, (for a lie is nothing) they are said (in this very word) to speak vanity. And still where the prophets have that phrase, in the person of God *Provocaverunt me vanitatibus, They have provoked God with their vanities*, the Chaldee paraphrase ever expresseth it, *idolis*, with their idols; and *idolum nihil est*[6], an idol, that is vanity, is nothing. Man therefore can have no deeper discouragement from inclining to the things of this world, than to be taught that they are nothing,

[4] Psalm CXLIV. 4; CXXXIX. 5. [5] Jer. XXIII. 16. [6] 1 Cor. VIII. 4.

nor higher encouragement to cleave to God for the next, than to know that himself is nothing too. This last of ourselves, is St. Paul's humility, *I am nothing*[7]; the first of other creatures, is the prophet Isaiah's instruction, *The nations are as a drop of the bucket, as the dust of the balance, the isles are as a little dust*[8]; this was little enough; but, all nations are before him as nothing; that was much less; for the disproportion between the least thing, and nothing, is more infinite than between the least thing, and the whole world. But there is a diminution of that too, they are all less than nothing; and what is that? Vanity, in that place, *nihilum, et inane*, and that is as low as Solomon carries them.

But because all the imaginations of the thoughts of man's heart, are only evil continually[9], as Moses heightens the corruption of man, and therefore men are not so much affrighted, with this returning to nothing, for they could be content to vanish at last and turn to nothing, there appears no harm to them in that, that the world comes to nothing; What care they, when they have no more use of it? and there appears an ease to them, if their souls might come to nothing too: therefore Solomon calls this world not only nothing, vanity, but affliction, and vexation of spirit. Tell a natural voluptuous man, of two sorts of torments in hell, *pœna damni*, and *pœna sensus*, one of privation, he shall not see God, and the other of real torments, he shall be actually tormented; the loss of the sight of God will not so much affect him, for he never saw him in his life; not in the marking of his grace, not in the glass of his creatures, and he thinks it will not much trouble him there to lack his sight, whom he never saw here; but when he comes to think of real torments, he sees some examples of them here in this life upon himself. And if he have but the toothache, he will think,that if that were to last eternally, it were an insufferable thing. And therefore Solomon affects us with that sensible addition, love not this world; Why? It is vanity, it will come to nothing: I care not for that; I will love it, as long as it is something; do not so, for it is not only vanity, but affliction, vexation too. It will be nothing at last, it ends;

[7] 2 Cor. xii. 11. [8] Isaiah xl. 15. [9] Gen. vi. 5.

but it is vexation too, that shall never end. The love of the world, is but a smoke, there is the vanity; but such a one, as puts out our eyes, there is the vexation; we do not see God here, we shall not see God hereafter.

These two words then, as to all the other parts in Solomon's anatomy, and cutting up of the world, so they do belong to that particular disposition, in this text; this reserving of riches to the owner, for his evil, and that which follows, is vanity, and vexation; but now we have passed that general consideration, there is thus much more to be considered. First an imputation laid upon the reserving, the gathering of riches: though riches be not in themselves ill, yet we are to be abstinent from an over-studious heaping of them, because naturally they are mingled with that danger, that they may be for the owner's evil: and therefore because it may come to that, it is a sickness to gather riches; and it is an evil sickness, for all sickness is not so: and it was no imaginary, but a true sickness, it was seen, it was under the sun; for that death itself, which is not seen, spiritual death in the torments of hell, is not so much thought of; this is seen; but it was the part of a wise man to see it, Solomon saw it, *There is an evil sickness, that I have seen under the sun: riches reserved to the owners thereof, for their evil. And those riches perish by evil travail; and he begetteth a son; and in his hand is nothing.*

There follows a dangerous, and deadly symptom of this sickness, that the riches perish. *There is an evil sickness that I have seen under the sun: riches reserved to the owners thereof, for their evil. And those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son; and in his hand is nothing.*

But that will not fall into this exercise.

First then, the imputation that is generally laid upon riches, appears most in those difficulties, which in the Gospels are so often said to lie in the rich man's way to heaven: particularly, where it is said to be, as hard for a rich man to enter into heaven, as for a camel to pass a needle's eye; God can do this; but if a rich man shall stay for his salvation, till God do draw a camel through a needle's eye, he may perchance stay, till all be served, and all the places of the angels filled. St. Hierome made it not

a proverb, but he found it one, and so he cites it, *Dives, aut iniquus est, aut iniqui hæres*[10]: A rich man is dishonest himself, or at least he succeeds a dishonest predecessor: proverbs have their limits, and rules have exceptions; but yet the proverb, and the rule lays a shrewd imputation, *ut plurimum*, for the most part it is so. It is not always so; we have a better proverb, against that proverb, The reward of humility, and the fear of God is riches, and glory, and life[11]; If we were able to digest, and concoct these temporal things into good nourishment; God's natural way is, and would be, to convey to us the testimony of his spiritual graces in outward and temporal benefits? as he did to the Jews in abundance of wine, and honey, and milk, and oil, and the like. He had rather we were rich, because we might advance his glory the more: at least they are equal: and any great measure of either, either of riches, or of poverty, are equal in their danger too. *Et quæ mulcent, et quæ molestant, timeo*[12]; Poverty, as well as riches, may put us from our Christian constancy; and therefore they are both prayed against, *Divitias et paupertates ne dederis*[13]; How riches are to be esteemed when they are compared with poverty, is another question, but how compared with heaven, is no question: we may see that by the place from whence they are said to come.

Christ is presented there in the person of Wisdom; and there it is said, Length of days, that is eternity, in her right hand, and in her left hand riches, and glory: *Nolite sitire sinistram*[14]; Press not too much upon God's left hand for riches here, lest that custom imprint a bias in you, and turn you on the left hand here, and bring thee to God's left hand in heaven too. Briefly they have an imputation upon them, they have an ill name, as hindrances to the next life, and they have it also as traitors to their masters, that they are reserved to the hurt of their owner in this life; and then, if that *væ*, be well placed, *Woe be unto you, that are rich, for you have received your consolation*[15], what a woeful thing is it, to have received no consolation in them, but to have had harm here by them?

To proceed then, riches may do harm to their owners. It is no easy matter for a rich man, to find out the true owners of all

[10] Epist. 160. vii. 1. [11] Prov. xxii. 4. [12] Bernard.
[13] Prov. xxx. [14] Bernard. [15] Luke xxvi. 24.

his riches. Thou art not owner of all, that the right owner cannot recover of thee; that all that is his by law, should be his. Certainly no rich man hath dealt much in this world, but he hath something, of which himself knows not the right owner, when he receives usury for his money, that interest is not his money, but when he receives usury again for that, there neither the interest, nor principal was his own money; he takes usury for that money for which himself was not the owner, because it was ill gotten: if thou do truly know the owner restore it to him; if after a diligent examination of thyself, thou do not know the particular owner; yet thou knowest it is none of thine, and therefore give it him, whose it was at first; both before thou hadst it, and before he from whom thou gottest it corruptly, had it; give it to God, in giving it to his poor, and afflicted members; give it him, and given willingly, and give it now, for that thou givest at thy death thou dost but leave by thy last will, thou dost not give; he only gives that might keep, thou givest unwillingly; howsoever they have it, by thy will, yet it is against thy will that they have it, thou givest then, but art sorry, that they to whom thou givest, that which thou givest, came so soon to it. And then *Sæpe infirmitatis servi officimur*[16], We become slaves to our last sickness often; oftentimes apoplexies stupefy us, and we are dull, and fevers enrage us, and we are mad; we are in a slavery to the disease, *Et servi non testantur*, says the law, Slaves have no power to make a will; *testare liber;* make thy will, and make it to be thy will, give it the effect, and execute thy will whilst thou art a free man, in state of health; restore that which is not thine; for even that of which thou art true owner may be reserved to thy harm; much more that, which is none of thine.

Every man may find in himself, that he hath done some sins, which he would not have done, if he had not been so rich: for there goes some cost to the most sins; his wantonness in wealth makes him do some; his wealth hath given him a confidence, that that fault would not be looked into, or that it would be bought out, if it were. Some sins we have done, because we are rich; but many more because we would be rich; and this is a

[16] Bernard.

spiritual harm, the riches do their owners. And for temporal harm, if it were hard to find in our own times, examples of men, which have incurred great displeasure, undergone heavy calamities, perished in unrecoverable shipwreck, all which they had escaped, if they had not been eminently, and enormously rich; we might in ancient history both profane and holy, find such precedents enough, as Naboth was; who if he had had no such vineyard, as lay convenient for so much a greater person, might have passed for an honest and religious man to God, and a good subject to the king, without any indictment of blasphemy against either, and never have been stoned to death[17]. The rich merchant at sea, is afraid that every fisherman is a pirate, and the fisherman fears not him. And if we should survey the body of our penal laws, whensoever the abuse of them makes them snares and springes to entangle men, we should see that they were principally directed upon rich men; neither can rich men comfort themselves in it, that though they be subject to more storms than other men, yet they have better ground-tackling, they are better able to ride it out than other men; for it goes more to the heart of that rich merchant, which we spoke of, to cast his goods over-board, than it does to the fisherman to lose his boat: and perchance his life. *Sudat pauper foris*[18]; It is true the poor man's brow sweats without; *Laborat intus dives*, The rich man's heart bleeds within; and the poor man can sooner wipe his face, than the rich man his heart, *gravius fastidio, quam ille inedia cruciatur*; the rich man is worse troubled to get a stomach, than the poor man to satisfy his: and his loathing of meat, is more wearisome, than the other's desire of it. Sum up the diseases that voluptuousness by the ministery of riches imprints in the body; the battery that malice, by the provocation of riches, lays to the fortune; the sins that confidence in our riches heaps upon our souls; and we shall see, that though riches be reserved to their owners, yet it is to their harm.

As then the burden of that song in the furnace, where all creatures were called upon to bless the Lord, was still, *Praise the Lord, and magnify him for ever*[19]; and as the burden of that

[17] 1 Kings xxi. [18] Bernard. [19] Ver. 36.

Psalm of thanksgiving, where so many of God's miracles are recorded, is this, *for his mercy endureth for ever;* so the burden of Solomon's exclamation against worldly things, is still in all these chapters, vanity, and vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit; so he adds thus much more to this particular distemper of reserving riches, naturally disposed to do us harm. That it is a sickness; now, *Sanitas naturalis*[20]; Nature abhors sickness, and therefore this is an unnatural desire. For whether we take this phrase of Solomon, for a metaphor and comparison, that this desire of riches, is like a sickness, that it hath the pains, and the discomforts, and the dangers of a sickness, or whether we take it literally, that it is a disordering, a discomposing, a distemper of the mind, and so truly, and really a sickness, and that this sickness induceth nothing but eternal death, nothing should make us more afraid than this sickness, (for the root of all evil is the desire of money). And then if it be truly a sickness all the way, and *morbus complicatus*, (a dropsy, and a consumption too) we seem great, but it is but a swelling, for our soul is lean; what a sad condition will there be, when their last bodily sickness, and this spiritual sickness meet together; a sick body, and a sick soul, will be but ignorant physicians, and miserable comforters to one another.

It is a sickness, and an evil sickness; and there is a weight added in that addition; for though all sickness have *rationem mali*, some degrees of the evil of punishment in it, yet sometimes the good purpose of God, in inflicting a sickness, and the good use of man, in mending by a sickness, overcome and weigh down that little dram, and washes away the pale tincture of evil, which is in it. There is a wholesome sickness, *Et est sanitas, quæ viaticum ad peccatum*[21], health sometimes victuals us, and fuels us, and arms us for sin, and we do those things, which, if we were sick, we could not do: and then, *Mala sanitas carnis, quæ ducit ad infirmitatem animæ*[22], It is an unwholesome health of the body, that occasions the sickness of the soul.

It is true, that in bodily sickness, *Tua dimicant contra te arma*[23], It is a discomfortable war, when thou fightest against thyself; *In*

[20] Bernard. [21] Basil.
[22] Bernard. [23] Bernard.

ipso gemis, in quo peccasti, that that flesh in which thou hast sinned, comes to vex, and anguish thee; that thy body is become but a bottle of rheum: thy sinews but a bundle of thorns, and thy bones but a furnace of vehement ashes. But if thou canst hear God, as St. Augustine did, *Ego novi unde ægrotes, Ego novi unde saneris*, I know thy disease, and I know thy cure, *Gratia mea sufficit*, my grace shall serve thy turn. Thou shalt come to that disposition of the apostle too; *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, because when I am weak, then am I strong*[24]: when thou art come to an apprehension of thy own weakness, thou comest also to a recourse to him, in whom only is thy saving health and recovery. But this sickness of gathering those riches which are reserved for our evil, comes not to that; it comes to the sickness, but not to the physic. In small diseases (saith St. Basil,) we go to the physician's house; in greater diseases, we send for the physician to our house; but in violent diseases, in the stupefaction of an apoplexy, in the damp of a lethargy, in the furnace of a pleurisy; we have no sense, no desire of a physician at all. When this inordinate love of riches begins in us, we have some tenderness of conscience, and we consult with God's ministers: after we admit the reprehensions of God's ministers when they speak to our consciences; but at last, the habit of our sin hath seared us up, and we never find that it is we, that the preacher means; we find that he touches others, but not us. Our wit, and our malice is awake, but our conscience is asleep; we can make a sermon a libel against others, and cannot find a sermon in a sermon, to ourselves. It is a sickness, and an evil sickness.

Now this is not such a sickness, as we have only read of, and no more. It concerns us not only so, as the memory of the sweat, of which we do rather wonder at the report, than consider the manner, or the remedies against it. Those divers plagues which God inflicted upon Pharaoh, for withholding his people; that devouring pestilence, which God struck David's kingdom with for numbering his people; that destruction which God kindled in Sennacherib's army for oppressing his people; these, because God hath represented them, in so clear, and so true a

[24] 2 Cor. xii. 10.

glass as his word, we do in a manner see them. Things in other stories we do but hear; things in the Scriptures we see: the Scriptures are as a room wainscotted with looking-glass, we see all at once. But this evil sickness of reserving riches to our own evil, is plainer to be seen; because it is daily round about us, daily within us, and in our consciences, and experiences. There are sins, that are not evident, not easily discerned; and therefore David annexes a schedule to his prayer after all, *Ab occultis meis munda me*, saith David, There are sins, which the difference of religion, makes a sin, or no sin; we know it to be a sin, to abstain from coming to church, our adversaries are made believe it is a time to come. There are middle-men, that when our church appoints coming, and receiving, and another church forbids both, they will do half of both; they will come, and not receive; and so be friends with both. There are sins recorded in the Scriptures, in which it is hard, for any to find the name, and the nature, what the sin was; How doth the school vex itself, to find out what was the nature of the sin of the angels, or what was the name of the sin of Adam? There are actions recorded in the Scriptures, in which by God's subsequent punishment, there appears sin to have been committed, and yet to have considered the action alone, without the testimony of God's displeasure upon it; a natural man would not easily find out a sin. Balaam was solicited to come, and curse God's people; he refused, he consulted with God[25]: God bids him go, but follow such instructions as he should give him after; and yet the wrath of God was kindled, because he went. Moses seems to have pursued God's commandment exactly, in drawing water out of the rock[26], and yet God says, Because you believed me not, you shall not bring this congregation into that land of promise. There are sins hard to be seen, out of the nature of man, because man naturally is not watchful upon his particular actions, for if he were so, he would escape great sins; when we see land, we are not much afraid of a stone; when a man sees his small sins, there is not so much danger of great. But some sins we see not out of a natural blindness in ourselves, some we see not out of a natural dimness in the sin itself. But this sickly sin, this sinful

[25] Numb. xxii. [26] Numb. xx.

sickness, of gathering riches, is so obvious, so manifest to every man's apprehension, as that the books of moral men, and philosophers are as full of it as the Bible. But yet the Holy Ghost, (as he doth always, even in moral counsels) exceeds the philosophers; for whereas they place this sickness in gathering unnecessary riches injuriously; the Holy Ghost in this place extends it further, to a reserving of those riches; that when we have sinned in the getting of them, we sin still in the not restoring of them. But to thee, who shouldest repent the ill getting; *Veniet tempus, quo non dispensesse, pœnitebit*, there will come a time when thou shalt repent the having kept them: *Hoc certum est, Ego sum sponsor*, Of this I dare be the surety (saith St. Basil) but we can leave St. Basil out of the bond; we have a better surety and undertaker, the Holy Ghost in Solomon; so that this evil sickness may be easily seen, it is made manifest enough to us all, by precedent from God, by example of others, by experience in ourselves.

To see this then, is an easy, a natural thing; but to see it so, as to condemn it, and avoid it, this is a wise man's flight; this was Solomon's flight. The wise man seeth the plague, and shunneth it; therein consists the wisdom. But for the fool, when he sees a thief, he runneth with him[27]; when he sees others thrive by ill getting, and ill keeping, he runs with them, he takes the same course as they do. Beloved, it is not intended, that true and heavenly wisdom may not consist with riches: Job, and the patriarchs, abounded with both; and our pattern in this place, Solomon himself, saith of himself, that he was great, and increased above all that were before him in Jerusalem[28], and yet his wisdom remained with him. The poor man and the rich are in heaven together: and to show us how the rich should use the poor, Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom; the rich should succour and relieve, and defend the poor in their bosoms. But when our Saviour declares a wisdom belonging to riches, (as in the parable of the unjust steward[29]) he places not this wisdom, in the getting, nor in the holding of riches, but only in the using of them; make you friends of your riches, that they may receive

[27] Psalm L. 18. [28] Eccles. ii. 9. [29] Luke xvi.

you into everlasting habitations. There is no simony in heaven, that a man can buy so much as a doorkeeper's place in the triumphant church: there is no bribery there, to fee ushers for access; but God holds that ladder there, whose foot stands upon the earth here, and all those good works, which are put upon the lowest step of that ladder here, that is, that are done in contemplation of him, they ascend to him, and descend again to us. Heaven and earth are as a musical instrument; if you touch a string below, the motion goes to the top: any good done to Christ's poor members upon earth, affects him in heaven; and as he said, *Quid me persequeris? Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* So he will say, *Venite benedicti, pavistis me, visitastis me.* This is the wisdom of their use; but the wisdom of their getting and keeping, is to see, that it is an evil sickness to get too laboriously, or to reserve too gripingly, things which tend naturally to the owner's evil: for, therefore in that parable doth Christ call all their riches generally, universally, *mammonas iniquitatis*, riches of iniquity, not that all that they had was ill got (that is not likely in so great a company) but that whatsoever, and howsoever they had got it, and were become true owners of it, yet they were riches of iniquity; because that is one iniquity, to possess much, and not distribute to the poor; and it is another iniquity, to call those things riches, which are only temporal, and so to defraud heavenly graces, and spiritual treasure of that name, that belongs only to them; and the greatest iniquity of all is towards ourselves. To take those riches to our heart, which Christ calls the thorns that choke the good seeds[30], and the apostle calls temptations, and snares, and foolish, and noisome lusts, which drown men in perdition, and in destruction[31], and which the wise man hath showed us here, *to be reserved to the owners for their evil.* To return to our beginning, and make an end; heaven is a feast, and heaven is a treasure: if ye prepare not for his feast, by being worthy guests at his table, if you embrace not his treasure, by being such merchants as give all for his pearl; another feast, and another treasure are expressed, and heightened in two such words, as never any tongue of any author, but the Holy Ghost himself spoke; *Inebriabit absinthio*, There is the feast, you

[30] Matt. xiii. 22. [31] 1 Tim. vi. 9.

shall be drunk with wormwood, you shall taste nothing but bitter affliction, and that shall make you reel, for you shall find in your affliction no rest for your souls. And for the treasure, *Thesaurizabis iram dei;* You shall treasure up wrath against the day of wrath[32]; and this will be an exchequer ever open, and never exhausted. But use the creatures of God, as creatures, and not as God, with a confidence in them, and you shall find *juge convivium*, in a good conscience, and *thesauros absconditos*, all the hid treasures of wisdom and knowledge[33]; you shall know how to be rich in this world by an honest getting of riches, and how to be rich in the next world by a christianly use of those riches here.

SERMON CXLI.

PREACHED AT WHITEHALL.

Second Sermon upon ECCLESIASTES v. 12, 13.

There is an evil sickness that I have seen under the sun: riches reserved to the owners thereof, for their evil. And these riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and in his hand is nothing.

THAT then which was intended in the former verse, that riches were hurtful even to the owners, St. Augustine hath well and fully expressed, *Eris præda hominum, qui jam es diaboli*[1]; The devil hath preyed upon thee already, by knowing what thou wouldst have, and great men will prey upon thee hereafter, by knowing what thou hast. But because the rich man thinks himself hard enough for both, for the devil, and for great men, if he may keep his riches; therefore here is that, which seems to him a greater calamity inflicted; first, his riches shall perish; and secondly those riches, those which he hath laboured and travailed for; and thirdly, they shall perish in travail, and labour, and affliction. And then not only all his present comfort shall

[32] Rom. ii. 5. [33] Col. ii. 3. [1] Aug. in Psalm cxxxi.

perish, but that which was his future hope: the son which he hath begot, shall have nothing in his hand.

He that increaseth his riches by usury and interest, gathereth them for him that will be merciful to the poor, says Solomon[2]. Is there a discomfort in this? There is. It is presented there for an affliction, and vexation to a rich man, to be told, that his money shall be employed in any other way, not only than he gathered it for, but than he gathered it by. It would grieve him to know, that his heir would purchase land, or buy an office with his money; for all other means of profit than himself hath tried, he esteems unthriftiness, casual, and hazardous; difference of seasons may change the value of his land, affections of men may change the value of an office; but whether the year be good or bad, a year it must be, and nothing can lengthen, or shorten his two harvests in the year, from six months to six. All ways, but his own, displease him in his heir; but if his heir will be giving to the poor (as Solomon says) then here are two mischiefs met together, that he could never abide the poor, and giving; and therefore such a contemplation is a double vexation to him; but much more must it be so, to hear that his riches shall perish; that they shall come to nothing, for though, if we consider it aright, it is truly all one, whether a covetous man's wealth do perish or no, for so much, as he hoards up, and hides, and puts to no use; it is all one whether that thousand pounds be in his chest or no, if he never see it, yet since he hath made his gold his god, he hath so much devilish religion in him as to be loth that his god should perish. And this, that is threatened here is an absolute perishing, an absolute annihilation; it is the same word, by which David expresses the abolition, and perishing of the wicked. The way of the wicked shall perish[3]; and which Moses repeats with vehemency twice together, *pereundo peribitis;* I pronounce unto you this day you shall surely perish[4]. So Judas, and his money perished. The money that Judas had taken; he was weary of keeping it, and they who had given it, would none of it neither. *Se primum mulctavit pecunia, deinde vita*[5]. First he fined himself, and then he hanged himself;

[2] Prov. xxviii. 8. [3] Psalm i. 6.
[4] Deut. xxx. 18. [5] Augustine.

first he cast back the money, and then he cast himself headlong and burst: oftentimes the money perishes, and the man too: yea it is not here only that they shall perish, in the future; that were a reprieve; it were a stalling of a debt; but (as both our translations have it) they do perish, they are always melting; yea as the original hath it, *vadit et periit*, they are already perished, they were born dead; ill gotten riches, bring with them from the beginning a contagion that works upon themselves, and their masters.

The riches shall perish, though they be his, though his title to them be good, if he put his trust in them; and those riches, those which he hath got by his travail, those which he hath reserved by his parsimony, and frugality. There is sometimes a greater reverence in us, towards our ancient inheritance towards those goods, which are devolved upon us, by succession; there is another affection expressed towards those things, which dying friends have left us, for they preserve their memories; another towards jewels, or other testimonies of an acceptation of our services from the prince: but still we love those things most, which we have got with our own labour, and industry. When a man comes to say with Jacob, With my staff came I over Jordan, and now have I gotten two bands[6], with this staff came I to London, with this staff came I to court, and now am thus and thus increased, a man loves those additions, which his own industry hath made to his fortune. There are some ungrateful natures that love other men the worse, for having bound them by benefits, and good turns to them: but that were a new ingratitude, not to be thankful to ourselves, not to love those things, which we ourselves have compassed. We have our reason to do so, in our great example, Christ Jesus, who loves us most, as we are his purchase, as he hath bought us with his blood; and therefore, though he hath expressed a love too, to the angels, in their confirmation, yet he cannot be said to love the angels, as he doth us, because his death hath wrought nothing upon them, which were fallen before; and for us, so he came principally to save sinners: the whole body and band of angels, are not his purchase, as all mankind is. This affection is in worldly men

[6] Gen. xxxii. 10.

too; they love their own gettings; and those shall perish. *They have given their pleasant things for meat, to refresh their souls*[7]: whatsoever they placed their heart upon, whatsoever they delighted in most, whatsoever they were loth to part withal, it shall perish; and the measure of their love to it and the desire of it shall be the measure of God's judgment upon it; that which they love most, shall perish first.

Those riches then, those best beloved riches shall perish, and that, saith the text, *by evil travail;* which is a word, that in the original signifies both *occupationem, negotiationem,* labour and travail, and *afflictionem, vexationem;* affliction, and vexation: they shall perish *in occupatione,* then when thou art labouring, and travailing in thy calling, then when thou art hearkening after a purchase, and a bargain, then when thy neighbours can impute no negligence, thou wast not negligent in gathering, nay no vice to thee, thou wast not dissolute in scattering, then when thou risest early, liest down late, and eatest the bread of sorrow, then shalt thou find, not only that that prospers not, which thou goest about, and pretendest to, but that which thou hadst before, decays, and moulders away. If we consider well in what abundance God satisfied the children of Israel with quails, and how that ended, we shall see example enough of this: You shall eat, saith God, not one or two days, nor five, nor ten, nor twenty, but a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and be loathsome unto you[8]; here was the promise, and it was performed for the plenty, that quails fell a day's journey round about the camp, and they were two cubits thick upon the earth; the people fell to their labour, and they arose, and gathered all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, saith the text; and he that gathered least, gathered ten gomers full; but as the promise was performed in the plenty, so it was in the course too; *Whilst the flesh was yet between their teeth before it was chewed, even the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and he smote them with an exceeding great plague.* Even whilst your money is under your fingers, whilst it is in your purposes determined, and digested for such, and such a purpose, whilst you have put it in a ship in merchandise, to win more to it; whilst you have sowed it in the

[7] Lam. i. 11. [8] Numb. xi. 19.

land of borrowers, to multiply, and grow upon mortgages, and usury, even when you are in the midst of your travail, storms at sea, thieves at land, enviers at court, informations at Westminster, whilst the meat is in your mouths, shall cast the wrath of God upon your riches, and they shall perish, *in occupatione*, then, when you travail to increase them. The children of Israel are said in that place, only to have wept to Moses, out of a lust, and a grief, for want of flesh. God punished not that weeping; it is a tenderness, a disposition, that God loves; but a weeping for worldly things, and things not necessary to them, (for manna might have served them) a weeping for not having, or for losing such things of this world, is always accompanied with a murmuring; God shall cause thy riches to perish in thy travail, not because he denies thee riches, nor because he would not have thee travail, but because an inordinate love, an over-studious, and an intemperate, and over-laborious pursuit of riches, is always accompanied with a diffidence, in God's providence, and a confidence in our own riches.

To give the wicked a better sense of this, God proceeds often the same way, with the righteous too; but with the wicked, because they do, with the righteous, lest they should trust in their own riches. We see in Job's case, it was not only his sons, and daughters, who were banquetting, nor only his asses, and sheep, and camels that were feeding, that were destroyed; but upon his oxen, that were ploughing, upon his servants, which were doing their particular duties, the Sabæans came, and destruction in their sword; his oxen, and his servants perished, *in occupatione*, in their labour, in their travail, when they were doing that, which they should do. And if God do thus to his children, to humble them beforehand, that they do not sacrifice to their own nets, not trust in their own industry, nor in their own riches, how much more vehemently shall his judgments burn upon them, whose purpose in gathering riches, was principally, that they might stand of themselves, and not need God. There are beasts that labour not, but yet furnish us, with their wool alive, and with their flesh, when they are dead; as sheep; there are men that desire riches, and though they do no other good, they are content to keep good houses, and that their heir

should do so, when they are dead; there are beasts that labour, and are meat at their death, but yield no other help in their life, and these are oxen; there are men that labour to be rich, and do no good with it, till their death; there are beasts that only labour, and yield nothing else in life, nor death, as horses: and there are some, that do neither, but only prey upon others, as lions, and others such; we need not apply particularly; there are all bestial natures in rich men; and God knows how to meet with them all; and much more will he punish them, which do no good, in life, nor death, nay that labour not for their riches but surfeit upon the sweat of other men, since even the riches of those, that trust in riches, shall perish *in occupatione*, in the very labour, and in the very travail, which (if it were not done with a confidence in the riches, when they are got,) were allowable, and acceptable to God.

You may have a good emblem of such a rich man, whose riches perish in his travail, if you take into your memory, and thoughts, a sponge that is overfilled; if you press it down, with your little finger, the water comes out of it; nay, if you lift it up, there comes water out of it; if you remove it out of its place, though to the right hand as well as to the left, it pours out water; nay if it lie still quiet in its place, yet it wets the place, and drops out its moisture. Such is an over-full, and spongy covetous person: he must pour out, as well as he hath sucked in; if the least weight of disgrace, or danger lie upon him, he bleeds out his money; nay, if he be raised up, if he be preferred, he hath no way to it, but by money, and he shall be raised, whether he will or no, for it. If he be stirred from one place to another, if he be suffered to settle where he is, and would be, still these two incommodities lie upon him; that he is lothest to part with his money, of anything, and yet he can do nothing without it. He labours for riches, and still he is but a bag, for other men: *pereunt in occupatione*, as fast as he gather by labour, God raises some occasion of drawing them from him again. It is not then with riches in a family, as it is with a nail in a wall, that the hard beating of it in, makes it the faster. It is not the hard and laborious getting of money, the fixing of that in a

strong wall, the laying it upon lands, and such things as are vulgarly distinguished from moveables, (as though the world, and we were not moveables) nor the beating that nail hard, the binding it with entails, of iron, and adamant, and perpetuities of eternity, that makes riches permanent, and sure; but it is the good purpose in the getting, and the good use in the having. And this good use is not, when thou makest good use of thy money, but when the commonwealth, where God hath given thee thy station, makes use of it: the commonwealth must suck upon it by trade, not it upon the commonwealth, by usury. Nurses that give suck to children, maintain themselves by it too; but both must be done; thou must be enriched so, by thy money, as that the state be not impoverished. This is the good use in having it; and the good purpose in getting it, is, that God may be glorified in it; some errors in using of riches, are not so dangerous; for some employing of them in excesses, and superfluities, this is a rust, without, it will be filed off with good counsel, or it will be worn off in time; in time we come to see the vanity of it: and when we leave looking at other men's clothes, or thinking them the better men for their clothes, why should we think, that others like us the better for our clothes; those desires will decay in us. But an ill purpose in getting of them, that we might stand of ourselves, and rely upon our riches, this is a rust, a cancer at the heart, and is incurable. And therefore, if as the course, and progress of money hath been in the world from the beginning, (the observation is St. Augustine's, but it is obvious to every man acquainted with history) that first the world used iron money, and then silver money, and last of all, gold; if thy first purpose in getting, have been for iron, (that thou have intended thy money to be thy strength, and defence in all calamities) and then for silver (to provide thee abundance, and ornaments, and excesses) and then for gold, to hoard, and treasure up in a little room; *Thesaurisasti iram;* Thou hast treasured up the anger of God, against the day of anger[9].

Go the same way still; account riches iron, (naturally apt to receive those rusts which we spoke of, in getting, and using) account them silver, (naturally intended to provide thee of things

[9] Rom. ii. 5.

necessary) but at last come to account them gold, naturally disposed to make thee a treasure in heaven, in the right use of them.

This is the true value of them; and except thou value them thus, *Nisi Dominus edificaverit, nisi Dominius custodierit*[10], Except the Lord build, except the Lord watch, the house, and city perish; so except the Lord and his glory, be in thy travail, it is not said thou shalt not get by thy travail. *Sed pereunt in occupatione.* Even in the midst of thy travail, that which thou gettest, shall perish.

And then that which makes this loss the more insupportable is, (as we noted the words to signify too) *pereunt in afflictione*, they shall perish then, when thou art in affliction, and shouldst have most use of them, most benefit by them, most content in them. If the disfavour of great persons lie heavy upon me abroad, *mihi plaudo domi*, I may have health, and wealth, and I can enjoy those at home, and make myself happy in them; if I have not all that, but that sickness lie heavy upon me, yet gold is cordial: that can provide all helps, that may be had, for my recovery, and it gives me that comfort to my mind, that I shall lack no attendance, no means of reparation. But if I suffer under the judgm. of the law, under the anger of the prince, under the vehemency of sickness, and then hear, that I am begged for some offence, hear of fines, and confiscations, and extents, hear of tempests and shipwrecks, hear of men's breaking, in whose hands my estate was, this is the wrath of God's anger, in this signification of the word, *pereunt in afflictione.* Those riches perish then, when nothing, but they, could be of use to thee.

And all this hath one step lower yet, They perish in evil travail, and in evil affliction. Now travail, did not begin in that curse, *In sudore vultus;* for Adam was appointed to dress paradise, and to keep paradise before; and that implied a travail. But then became his travail to be evil travail, when seeing that he could not get bread without travail, still that refreshed to him the guiltiness of that sin, which had dejected him, to that misery. Then doth the rich man see, that his riches perish by evil travail, when he calls himself to account. and finds that he trusted wholly to his own travail, and not to the blessings of God. So also every

[10] Psalm cxxvii. 1.

affliction is not evil: it is rather evil to have none; if ye be without correction, you are bastards, and not sons. God's own and only essential Son, Christ Jesus, suffered most; and his adopted sons, must fulfil his sufferings in their flesh, we are born God's sons, and heirs, in his purpose at first; and we are declared to be so, in our second birth of baptism, but we are not come to years, not come to a trial, how we can govern ourselves, till we suffer afflictions, but then doth this affliction become evil, when that which God intended for physic, we turn into poison: when God hearkens after this affliction, to hear what voice it produces, and when he looks for repentance, he hears a murmuring, and repining, when he bends down his ear, for a *Tibi peccavi*, he hears a *Quare non mortuus?* Why died I not in my birth[11]? When he hearkens after, a *Domine ne statuas*, Lord lay not this sin to their charge[12], a prayer for our persecutors, he hears a *Redde eis vicem*[13], Give them a recompense O Lord, according to their work, give them a sorrow of heart, thy curse to them; as it is there, (though there, not by way of murmuring, but by way of foresight, and prophecy, that God would do so.) But to end this part, then when the rich man can make no good use of his affliction, when he finds, *nullam ansam*, no handle in it, to take hold of God by, when he can find no comfort in the next world, he shall lose all here too. And his riches, those riches, which his labour hath made dear unto him, shall not only be taken from him, and he put to his recovery, but they shall perish, and they shall perish in the midst of those labours, which are evil, and eat him up, and macerate him. And they shall perish in these afflictions which are evil too, which shall not work, nor conduce to his good.

We come now to the second part: which respects more the future; *He begetteth a son;* first that may seem to give him some ease; every body desires it. And secondly, it may seem to give him some excuse of his gathering, because having children, he was bound to provide for them. But such is God's indignation for the getting of riches with a confidence in them, that he loses all, all comfort in his son, all excuse in himself, for in the hands of his son shall be nothing. First then, for the having of chil-

[11] Job iii. 11. [12] Acts vii. 60. [13] Lam. iii. 64.

dren, and the testimony of God's love in that blessing, this diminishes nothing, the honour due to the first chastity, the chastity of virginity. There is a chastity in marriage: but the chastity of virginity, is the proper, and principal chastity. Barrenness, amongst the Jews, was An ignominious thing; but it was considered only in them which did marry, and were barren: God hath given us marriage for physic; but it is an unwholesome wantonness to take physic before we need it: marriage, in God's institution at first, had but two ends; *in prolem*, and *in adjutorium;* after man was fallen sick, then another was added, *in remedium.* Marriage is properly according to God's institution, when all these concur: where none do it is scarce a marriage. When we have taken the physic, yet we are not come to the state of strength, and health, which is intended in marriage, till we have children to be the staff of our age; *Behold children are the inheritance of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb his reward*[14]; he gives marriage for physic; but children are a real blessing, in itself, and reserved to him. And therefore, when God hath given us that use of marriage, (we are married) he is at an end of his physic; he doth not appoint us to take physic again for children: he does not forbid us to take physic, to preserve our bodies in a good, and healthy constitution; but drugs, and broths, and baths, purposely for children, come not out of his shop; they are not his ingredients. It is his own work, the gift of children: and therefore when Rachel came to say to Jacob; *Give me children, or else I die*[15], Jacob's anger was kindled against her, *Anne ego pro deo:* Am I a god, to do this. And therefore it is not inconveniently noted, that as the first man Cain, was called *Acquisitus à Domino*, he was possessed from the Lord; so after, so very many names in the Scriptures, held that way of testifying the gift to come from God, that as Samuel, which is *postulatus à Deo*, so all the names that have that termination, *el*, have such a signification in them; and so in the declining of the Jews' state, Matheus, is *Domini Dei*, and Johannes, is *gratia Dei;* and in the beginning of the Christian church, everywhere they abounded with, *Deo date, Deus dedit*, and *quod vult Deus*, and such names as were acknowledgments, that children were the immediate gift of

[14] Psalm cxxvii. 14.

[15] Gen. xxx. 1.

God. And therefore when God said to Abraham; *I will be thine exceeding great reward*, and Abraham said, *O Lord God what wilt thou give me, seeing I am childless*[16]? God comes to particulars with him first in that, that he would give him children: and therefore, as to all men, so to this rich man; in our text, it may be naturally admitted for a comfort, that he had a son.

Now as it was a just comfort, to have children, so it was a just excuse, a just encouragement to provide for them; If there be any that provideth not for his own, he denieth the faith[17]; (that is, in his actions, and works of faith,) and he is worse than an infidel; for infidels do provide for their own. *Christianismi famam negligit*[18], He betrays the honour, and dignity of the Christian religion; if he neglect his children, and he hath opened a large gate of scandal to the Gentiles. And therefore saith St. Augustine, *Quicunque vult:* Whosoever will disinherit his sons, though it be upon pretext of doing good service, by building, or endowing a church, or making the church his heir; *Quærat alterum qui suscipiat, non Augustinum: immo, Deo propitio, neminem inveniet:* Let him find another that will accept his offer; for Augustine will not; nor, by God's grace any other. The tie, the obligation of providing for our children, binds us strictly; for it is, *secunda post Deum fœderatio*[19]; next to the band of religion, next to our service to God, our first duty is to provide for them.

But yet, *Dic obsecro, cum liberos à Deo petiisti*[20]; when thou didst pray to God to give thee children, didst thou add this clause to thy prayer, *Da liberos*, Give me children, that I may thereby have an excuse, of my covetousness, of my breach of thy commandment, of my prophaning thy Sabbaths, of my usury, of my perjury; was this in thy prayer, saith he. If it were, the child shall surely die, as Nathan said to David: God will punish thee, in taking those children from thee, which were the colours of thy sin: The children of the ungodly, shall not obtain many branches[21]; not extend to many generations; if they do, if his children be in great number, the sword shall destroy them; his remnant shall be buried in death, and his widows shall not

[16] Gen. xv. 1. [17] 1 Tim. v. 8. [18] Chrysostom.
[19] Hier. epist. xlvii. [20] Chrysostom. [21] Ecclus. xl. 13.

weep[22]. Howsoever, as the words of the text stand, the Holy Ghost hath left us at our liberty, to observe one degree of misery more in this corrupt man. That he is said, to have begot his son, after those riches are perished. He had a discomfort in evil travail, and in evil affliction before; he hath another now, that when all is gone, then he hath children, the foresight of whose misery must needs be a continual affliction unto him. For St. Augustine reports it, not as a leading case, likely to be followed, but as a singular case, likely to stand alone; that when a rich man, who had no child, nor hope of any, had given his estate to Auretius bishop of Carthage, and after, beyond all expectation, came to have children, that good bishop unconstrained by any law, or intent in the donor, gave him back his estate again. God, when he will punish ill getting, will take to himself that which was robbed from him, and then, if he give children, he will not be bound to restitution.

But if this rich man have his riches, and his son together, the son may have come from God, and the riches from the devil, and God will not join them together. Howsoever, he may in his mercy provide for the son otherwise, yet he will not make him heir of his father's estate. The substance of the ungodly shall be dried up like a river; and they shall make a sound like a thunder, in rain[23]. It shall perish, and it shall be *in parabolam*, it shall be the wonder, and the discourse of the time. If they be not wasted in his own time, yet he shall be an ill, but a true prophet upon himself; he shall have impressions, and sensible apprehensions of a future waste, as soon, as he is gone: he shall hear, or he shall whisper to himself that voice: O fool, this night they will fetch away thy soul[24]; he must go under the imputation of a fool, where the wisdom of this generation, (which was all the wisdom he had,) will do him no good; he must go like a fool. His soul must be fetched away; he hath not his, *in manus tuas*, his willing surrender of his soul ready; it must be fetched in the night of ignorance, when he knows not his own spiritual state; it must be fetched in the night of darkness, in the night of solitude, no sense of the assistance of the communion of

[22] Job xxvii. 14. [23] Ecclus. xl. [24] Luke xii. 20.

saints in the Triumphant, nor in the Militant church; in the night of disconsolateness; no comfort in that sea, absolution, which by the power committed to them, God's ministers came* to the penitent, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and it must be fetched this night; the night is already upon him, before he thought of it. All this, that the soul of this fool, shall be fetched away this night, is presented for certain, and inevitable; all this admits no question; but the *Quæ parasti, cujus erunt*, there is the doubt: Then, whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? If he say, they shall be his son's, God saith here, In his hand shall be nothing; for, though God may spare him, that his riches be not perished before his death, though God have not discovered his iniquity, by that manner of punishment, yet, *Quod in radice celatur, in ramis declaratur;* God will show that in the bough which was hid in the root, the iniquity of the father in the penury of the son. And therefore, to conclude all, since riches are naturally conditioned so, as that they are to the owner's harm, either testimonies of his former hard dealing in the world, or temptation to future sins, or provocations to other men's malice, since that though, thou may have repented the ill getting of those riches, yet, thou mayest have omitted restitution, and so there hovers an invisible owner over thy riches, which may carry them away at last, since though, thou mayest have repented, and restored, and possess thy riches, that are left, with a good conscience; yet as we said before, from Nathan's mouth, the child may die, God, that hath many ways of expressing his mercies, may take this one way of expressing his judgment, that yet thy son shall have nothing of all that in his hand, put something else into his hand; put a book, put a sword, put a ship, put a plough, put a trade, put a course of life, a calling, into his hand; and put something into his head, the wisdom, and discretion, and understanding of a serpent, necessary for those courses, and callings. But principally, put something into his heart, a religious fear, and reverence of his Maker; a religious apprehension, and application of his Saviour, a religious sense, and acceptation of the comforts of the Holy Spirit; that so, if he feel, that for his

* It is thus in the text: I am quite unable to correct it satisfactorily.—ED.

father's hard dealing, God hath removed the possession from him, he doth not doubt therefore of God's mercy to his father, nor dishonour his father's memory, but behave himself so in his course, as that the like judgment may not fall upon his son; but that his riches increasing, by his good travail, they may still remain in the hands of his son, whom he hath begotten.

SERMON CXLII.

A SERMON PREACHED AT GREENWICH, APRIL 30, 1615.

ISAIAH lii. 3.

Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money.

IT is evident in itself, and agreed by all, that this is a prophecy of a deliverance; but from what calamity it is a deliverance, or when this prophecy was accomplished, is not so evident, nor so constantly agreed upon. All the expositions may well be reduced to three; first, that it is a deliverance from the captivity of Babylon, and then the benefit appertains only to the Jews, and their deliverer, and redeemer is Cyrus; secondly, that it is a deliverance from persecutions in the primitive church, and so it appertains only to Christians, and their Redeemer, from those persecutions, is Constantine; and thirdly that it is a deliverance from the sting and bondage of death by sin; and so it appertains to the whole world, and the Redeemer of the whole world is Christ Jesus: for the first, since both the Chaldee paraphrase, and the Jewish rabbins themselves, do interpret this to be a prophecy of the Messias, because they labour evermore, as strongly as they can, to wring our weapons out of our hands, and to take from us, many of those arguments, which we take from the prophets, for the proof of the Messias: it concerns us therefore to hold fast, as much as they grant us, and not to interpret this place of a temporal deliverance from Babylon, but of the deliverance by the Messias. And for the second, which is the deliverance of the Christians, from the persecutions in the

primitive times, though the Christians did then with a holy cheerfulness suffer those persecutions, when they could not avoid them, without prevaricating, and betraying the hour of Christ Jesus, yet they did not wilfully thrust themselves into those dangers, they did not provoke the magistrate; and the word which is here translated, *ye sold yourselves*, *vendidistis vos*, implies *actionem spontaneam*, a free and voluntary action, done by themselves, and therefore cannot well be understood of the persecutions in the primitive church. The third therefore, as yet is the most useful and most received, so it is the most proper acceptation of the word, that it is a deliverance from the bondage of sin, to be wrought by Christ: for as St. Hierome says, This prophet Esay, is rather an evangelist, than a prophet, because almost all that Christ did, and said, and suffered, is foretold, and prophetically antedated in his prophecy, and almost all his prophecy hath some relation (at least in a secondary sense of accommodation, where it is not so primarily, and literally) to the words and actions, and passions of Christ.

Following then this interpretation in general of the word, that it is a deliverance from the wages of sin, death by Christ we may take, in passing a short view, of the miserable condition of man, wherein he enwrapped himself, and of the abundant mercy of Christ Jesus in withdrawing him from that universal calamity, by considering only the sense, and largeness, and extension of those words, in which the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to express both these in this text. For first, the word in which our action is expressed, which is *mackar*[1], *vendidistis*, ye have sold, signifies in many places of Scripture, *dare pro re alia*, a permutation, an exchange of one thing for another; and in other places it signifies *dedere*, upon any little attempt to forsake and abandon our defences, and to suffer the enemy easily to prevail upon us; so also it signifies *tradere*, not only to forsake ourselves, but to concur actually to the delivering up of ourselves; and lastly, it signifies *repellere*, to join with our enemies in beating back any that should come to our relief, and rescue. And then, as we have so sold ourselves, for the substance of the act, as is expressed in that word *machar*, we have exchanged

[1] חִנָּם נִמְכַּרְתֶּם

ourselves at an undervalue, and worse than that, we have yielded up ourselves upon easy temptations, and worse than that, we have offered ourselves, exposed ourselves, invited the devil, and tempted temptations, and worse than that, we have rejected the succours and the supplies which have been offered us in the means and conduits, and seals of his graces. As it stands thus with us, for the matter, so for the manner, how we have done this, that is expressed in that other word, *kinnam*, which signifies *fecit*, as it is here, *gratis*, for nought. And in another place, *frustra*, to no purpose; for it is a void bargain, because we had no title, no interest in ourselves, when we sold ourselves; and it signifies, *temere*, rashly, without consideration of our own value, upon whom God had stamped his image; and then again it signifies, *immerito*, undeservedly, before God, in whose jurisdiction we were by many titles, had forsaken us, or done anything to make us forsake him. So that our action in selling ourselves for nothing, hath this latitude, that man whom God hath dignified so much, as that in the creation he imprinted his image in him, and in the redemption he assumed not the image, but the very nature of man, that man whom God still preserved as the apple of his eye, and (as he expresses himself often in the prophets) is content to reason, and to dispute with man, and to submit himself to any trial whether he have not been a gracious God unto him: that this man should thus abandon this God, and exchange his soul for anything in this world, when as it can profit nothing, to gain the whole world and lose our own soul, and not exchange it, but give it away, thrust it off, and be a devil to the devil, to tempt the tempter himself to take it. But then, as the word aggravates our condemnation, so it implies a consolation too; for it is *frustra*, that is unprovidently, unthriftily, inconsiderately, vainly, and that multiplies our fault, but then it is invalidly, and uneffectually too; that is, it is a void bargain; and when our powerful Redeemer, is pleased to come, and claim his right, and set on foot his title, all this improvident bargain of ours is voided, and reversed, and not though, but because we have sold ourselves, for nought, we shall be redeemed without money.

For the other word, in which the action of our Redeemer is

expressed though it have somewhat different uses in the Scriptures, yet it is evermore spoken of him, *Qui habet jus redimendi*, No man, by the law, could redeem a thing, but he who had a title to that thing. So the word is used, where there are given cities of refuge from the avenger. There the word is, *a redemptor*, from him that hath right to redeem his kinsman's blood, to bring an appeal, and to prosecute for the death of his kinsman, who was slain. So is the word used also, where that law is given, &c. *If thy brother be impoverished, and he sell his possession then his redeemer*, &c., that is, he that is next to that land; and so also, when a man died without issue, he who had the right, and the obligation, to raise seed to the dead man, he was the redeemer: *I am thy kinsman*, saith Boaz to Ruth, but saith he, *Alius redemptor magis propinquos*, Thou hast another redeemer, nearer in blood than I am. How ill a bargain soever we made for ourselves, Christ Jesus hath not lost his right in us, but is our Redeemer in all these acceptations of the word: he is our sanctuary and refuge; when we have committed spiritual murder upon our own souls, he preserves us, and delivers us to the redemption ordained for us: when we have sold our possessions, our natural faculties, he supplies us with grace, and feeds us with his word, and clothes us with his sacraments, and warms us with his absolutions, against all diffidence, which had formerly frozen us up: and in our barrenness, he raises up seed unto our dead souls, thoughts, and works, worthy of repentance. All this, thy Redeemer hath right to do; and, when it pleases him to do it he does it, *sine argento*, without money; when the word *casaph*[a], signifies not only money, but, *omne appetibile*, anything that we can place our desires, or cast our thoughts, upon. This redemption of ours, is wrought by such means, as the desire of man could never have fortuned upon; the incarnation of God, and then the death and crucifying of that God, so incarnate, could never have fallen within the desire, nor wish of any man; neither would any man of himself ever have conceived, that the sacraments of the church, poor and naked things of themselves, (for all that the wit of man could imagine in them, or allow to

[a] כָּסַף

them) should be such means to seal, and convey the graces, which accompany this redemption of our souls, to our souls.

So then, having thus represented unto you, a model, and design, of the miserable condition of man, and the abundant mercy of our Redeemer, so far, as those words which the Holy Ghost hath chosen in this text, hath invited and led us, that we may look better upon some pieces of it, that we may take such a sight of this Redeemer here, as that we may know him, when we meet him at home, at our house, in our private meditations, at his house, in the last judgment. I shall only offer you two considerations; *exprobationem*, and *consolationem;* first, an exprobration, or increpation from God to us. And then a consolation, or consolidation of the same God upon us; and in the exprobration, God reproaches to us, first, our prodigality, that we would sell a reversion, our possibility, our expectance of an inheritance in heaven; and then, our cheapness, that we would sell that, for nothing.

First then, prodigality is a sin, that destroys even the means of liberality. If a man waste so, as that he becomes unable to relieve others, by this waste, this is a sinful prodigality; but much more if he waste so as that he is not able to subsist, and maintain himself; and this is our case, who have even annihilated ourselves, by our profuseness; for it is his mercy that we are not consumed. It is a sin, and a viperous sin; it eats out his own womb; the prodigal consumes that that should maintain his prodigality: it is *peccatum biathanaton*, a sin that murders itself.

Now, as in civil prodigalities, in a wastefulness of our temporal estate, the law inflicts three kinds of punishment, three incommodities upon him that is a prodigal, so have the same punishments a proportion, and some things that answer them, in this spiritual prodigality of the soul by sin. The first is, *Bonis suis interdicitur;* He that is a prodigal, in the law, cannot dispose of his own estate; whatsoever he gives, or sells, or leases, all is void, as of a madman, or of an infant. And such is the condition of a man in sin; he hath no interest in his own natural faculties; he cannot think, he cannot wish, he cannot do anything of himself; the venom and the malignity of his sin goes through all his actions, and he cannot purge it.

The second incommodity is, *Testamentum non facit*, The prodigal person hath no power allowed him by the law, to make a will, at his death: and this also doth an habitual sinner suffer: for, when he comes to this end, he may dictate to a notary, and he may bid him write, *imprimis*, I give my soul to God, my body to such a church, my goods to such, and such persons: but if those goods be liable to other debts, the legataries shall have no profit; if the person be under excommunication, he shall not lie in that church; if his soul be under the weight of unrepented sins, God will do the devil no wrong, he will not take a soul, that is sold to him before.

The third incommodity that a prodigal incurs by the law, is, *Exhæredatus creditur*, He is presumed to be disinherited by his father; that whereas, by that law, if the father, in his will, leave out any of his children's names, and never mention him, yet that child which is pretermitted, shall come in for a child's part, except the father have assigned a particular reason why he left him out; if this child were a prodigal, there needs no other reason to be assigned, but *Exhæredatus creditur*, He is presumed to be disinherited. And so also, if we have seen a man prodigal of his own soul, and run on in a course of sin, all his life, except there appear very evident signs of resumption into God's grace, at his end, *exhæredatus creditur*, we have just reason to be afraid, that he is disinherited. If any such sinner seem to thee to repent at his end, *Fateor vobis non negamus, quod petit*, saith St. Augustine: I confess, we ought not to deny him any help that he desires in that late extremity; *Sed non præsumimus quia bene exit*, I dare not assure you, that that man dies in a good state; he adds that vehemence, *non præsumo, non vos fallo, non præsumo:* I should but deceive you, if I should assure you, that such a man died well. There was one good and happy thief, that stole a salvation, at the crucifying of Christ; but in him, that was thoroughly true, which is proverbially spoken, *Occasio facit furem*, The opportunity made him a thief: and when there is such another opportunity, there may be such another thief; when Christ is to die again, we may presume of mercy, upon such a late repentance at our death. The preventing grace of God, made him lay violent hands upon heaven. But when thou

art a prodigal of thy soul, will God be a prodigal too, for thy sake, and betray and prostitute the kingdom of heaven, for a sigh, or a groan, in which thy pain may have a greater part than thy repentance. God can raise up children out of the stones of the street, and therefore he might be as liberal as he would of his people, and suffer them to be sold for old shoes; but Christ will not sell his birth-right for a mess of pottage, the kingdom of heaven, for the dole at a funeral. Heaven is not to be had in exchange for an hospital, or a chantry, or a college erected in thy last will: it is not only the selling all we have, that must buy that pearl, which represents the kingdom of heaven; the giving of all that we have to the poor, at our death, will not do it; the pearl must be sought, and found before, in an even, and constant course of sanctification; we must be thrifty all our life, or we shall be too poor for that purchase.

It is then an unthrifty, a perplexed bargain, when both the buyer, and the seller lose; our loss is plain enough, for we lose our souls: and certainly, howsoever the devil be expressed to take some joy at the winning of a sinner, howsoever his kingdom be thereby enlarged, yet Almighty God suffers not his treason, his undermining of man, to be unpunished, but afflicts him with more and more accidental torments, even for that; as a licentious man takes pleasure in the victory of having corrupted a woman, by his solicitation, but yet insensibly overthrows his constitution, by his sin; so the withdrawing of God's subjects, from his allegiance, induces an addition of punishment upon the devil himself.

Consider a little farther, our wretchedness, in this prodigality; we think those laws barbarous and inhuman, which permit the suit of men in debt, for the satisfaction of creditors; but we sell ourselves, and grow the farther in debt, by being sold; we are sold, and to even rate our debts*, and to aggravate our condemnation. We find in the history of the Muscovites, that it is an ordinary detainer amongst them, to sell themselves, and their

* There seems to be something corrupt here in the text. Is the first "and" to be understood as "both?" This sermon, and one or two besides, are in coarser type than the rest of the third folio volume, and very inaccurately printed.—Ed.

posterity, into everlasting bondage, for hot drink: in one winter, a wretched man will drink himself, and his posterity, into perpetual slavery. But we sell ourselves, not for drink, but for thirst: we are sorry when our appetite too soon decays, and we would fain sin more than we do. At what a high rate did the blessed martyrs sell their bodies; they built up God's church with their blood: they sowed his field, and prepared his harvest with their blood: they got heaven for their bodies, and we give bodies, and souls for hell.

In a right inventory, every man that ascends to a true value of himself, considers it thus: first, his soul, then his life; after his fame and good name: and lastly, his goods and estate; for thus their own nature hath ranked them, and thus they are (as in nature) so ordinarily in legal consideration preferred before one another. But for our souls, because we know not, how they came into us, we care not how they go out; because, if I ask a philosopher, whither my soul came in, by propagation from my parents, or by an immediate infusion from God, perchance he cannot tell, so I think, a divine can no more tell me, whether, when my soul goes out of me, it be likely to turn on the right, or on the left hand, if I continue in this course of sin. And then, for the second thing in this inventory, life; the devil himself said true, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life;* indeed we do not easily give away our lives expressly, and at once; but we do very easily suffer ourselves to be cosened of our lives: we pour in death in drink, and we call that health, we know our life to be but a span, and yet we can wash away one inch in riot, we can burn away one inch in lust, we can bleed away one inch in quarrels, we have not an inch for every sin; and if we do not pour out our lives yet we drop them away. For the third piece of ourself, our fame and reputation, who had not rather be thought an usurer, than a beggar? Who had not rather be the object of envy, by being great, than of scorn and contempt, by being poor, upon any conditions? And for the last of all, which is our goods, though our covetousness appears most, in the love of them, in that lowest thing of all (*Adeo omnia homini cariora seipso*[3], so much does every man

[3] Seneca.

think every inferior thing better than himself, than his fame, than his body, than his soul; which is a most perverse undervaluing of himself, and a damnable humility) yet even with these goods also, (as highly as he values them) a man will part, if to fuel, and foment, and maintain that sin, that he delights in: that which is the most precious, our souls, we undervalue most; and that which we do esteem most, (though naturally it should be lowest) our estate, we are content to waste, and dissipate for our sins: and whereas the heathens needed laws to restrain them, from an expensive, and wasteful worship of their gods, every man was so apt to exceed in sacrifices and such other religious duties, till that law, *Deos frugi colunto*, Let men be thrifty and moderate in religious expenses, was enacted, (which law was a kind of mortmain, and inhibition, that every man might not bestow what he would, upon the service of those gods) we have turned our prodigality the other way, upon the devil, whom we have made *hæredem in esse* and our sole executor, and sacrificed soul, and life, and fame, and fortune, all the gifts of God, and God himself, by making his religion, and his sacraments, and the profession of his name, in an hypocritical use, of them, to be the devil's instruments, to draw us the easilier, and hold us the faster; and what prodigality can be conceived to exceed this, in which we do not only mispend ourselves, but mispend our God.

The other point in this exprobration is, that, as we have prodigally sold ourselves, so we have inconsiderately sold ourselves for nothing; we have in our bargain diseases, and we have poverty, and we have uusensibleness of our miseries; but diseases are but privations of health, and poverty but a privation of wealth, and unsensibleness but a privation of tenderness of conscience; all are privations, and privations are nothing. If a man had got nothing by a bargain but repentance, he would think, and justly, he had got little: but if thou hadst repentance in this bargain, thy bargain were the better; if thou couldst come to think thy bargain bad, it were a good bargain; but the height of the misery is in this, that one of those nothings, for which we have sold ourselves is a stupidity, an unsensibleness of our own wretchedness.

The laws do annul, and make void fraudulent conveyances; and then the laws presume fraud in the conveyance, if at least half the value of the thing be not given: now if the whole world be not worth one soul, who can say, that he hath half his value? It were not merely nothing, if (considering that inventory, which we spoke of before) we had the worse for the better; that were but an ill exchange, but yet it were not nothing. If we had bodies for our souls, it were not merely nothing; but we find, that sin that sells our souls, decays and withers our bodies; our bodies grow incapable of that sin, unable to commit that sin, which we sold our souls for. If we had fame and reputation for our bodies, it were not nothing: but we see, that heretics, that give their bodies to the fire, are by the very law, infamous, and they are infamous in every man's apprehension. If we had worldly goods for loss of fame, and of our good name, yet still it were not nothing; but we see that witches, who are infamous persons, for the most part, live in extreme beggary too. So that the exprobration is just, we have sold ourselves for nothing; and however the ordinary murmuring may be true, in other things, that all things are grown dearer, our souls are still cheap enough, which at first were all sold in gross, for (perchance) an apple, and are now retailed every day for nothing.

Joseph was sold underfoot by his brethren; but it is hard to say, for how much; some copies have that he was sold for twenty pieces, and some for twenty-five, and some for thirty: and St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, collect arguments, at least, allusions, from this variety of copies: but all these say, it was but so many pieces of silver. The Septuagint, in their translation, extend them to gold, to so many crowns, or such: Josephus multiplies them to pounds, so many pounds: all think it too low a price for Joseph, to be sold for twenty pieces of silver. But yet if it were so, this was not for nothing; and for this selling, his brethren had some pretence of excuse *ne polluantur manus*, they would but sell him, lest their hands should be defiled with blood: but we sell ourselves, *ut polluantur manus*, therefore, that our hands may be defiled with blood, even with our own blood, with the loss of our bodies, which we consume by sin, and of our souls, which perish eternally by it.

Our Saviour Christ, every drop of whose blood was of infinite value (for one of our souls is more worth than the whole world, and one drop of his blood had been sufficient for all the souls of a thousand worlds, if it had been applied unto them) was sold scornfully and basely, at a low price; at most, not above six pounds of our money; but we sell ourselves, and him too, we crucify him again every day, for nothing: and when our sin is the very crucifying of him, that should save us, who shall save us? Earthly princes have been so jealous of their honours, as that they have made it treason, to carry their pictures into any low office, or into any irreverend place. Beloved, whensoever we commit any sin, upon discourse, upon consideration, upon purpose, and plot, the image of God which is engraved and imprinted in us, and lodged in our understanding, and in that reason which we employ in that sin, is mingled with that sin; we draw the image of God into all our incontinencies, into all our oppressions, into all our extortions, and supplantations: we carry his image, into all foul places, which we haunt upon earth; yea we carry his image down with us, to eternal condemnation: for, even in hell, *Uri potest, non exuri imago Dei*, says St. Bernard; The image of God burns in us in hell, but can never be burnt out of us: as long as the understanding soul remains, the image of God remains in it, and so we have used the image of God, as witches are said to do the images of men; by wounding or melting the image, they destroy the person: and we by defacing the image of God in ourselves by sin, to the painful and shameful death of the cross.

Rachel and Leah complained of their father Laban, thus, *He hath sold us, and hath eat, and consumed the money;* they lamented it much, to see themselves sold, and by their father, and their father never the better for the bargain. But still our case is worse than any; the devil hath bought us, and he, he who hath bought us, hath eaten and consumed the money: he pretends to buy us, by giving us pleasure, or profit for ourselves, and then those very pleasures, and those riches, which he pretends to give us, are his food, and his instruments, to effect his mischievous and tyrannous purposes upon us. And therefore let no man think himself exempt from this challenge, that he hath sold

himself for nothing. Let no man present his dutals, his court-rolls, his bacus*, his good debts, his titles of honour, his maces, or his staves, or his ensigns of power and office, and say, Call you all this nothing? Compare all these with thy soul, and they are nothing. Now, whilst thou wallowest in all these here, thou mayest hear God say, *Quid habes, quod non accepisti, What hast thou of all this, which thou hast not received?* But when the bell tolls, then he shall say, in the voice of that bell, *Quid habes quod accepisti*, What hast thou of all that thou hast received? Is not all that come to nothing? And then thou that thoughtest thyself strong enough in purse, in power, in favour, to compass anything, and to embrace many things, shalt not find thyself able to attain to a door-keeper's place in the kingdom of heaven.

Let no man therefore take too much joy, to apply to himself those words of the parable, *Filii sæculi, The children of this world* (which grow rich) *are wiser than the children of light;* for it is but, *in generatione sua, wiser in their generation;* and how little a while that generation shall last, God knows; and what fools they shall appear to be, for all generations after, we know. They are called the wisest amongst men, as the serpent was called the wisest amongst beasts, that is, still, the fittest for the devil to work in, to make his instruments, and engines to desire a curse upon themselves, and their posterity. Let no man wrest God's example to his purpose, and say, if he do sell himself for nothing, he does but as God himself did, and as David told him he did, *Thou sellest thy people without gain, and dost not increase their price*[4]. That was not for nothing; God had his end in that: neither was it an absolute sale; but a short term: God sells us over to sickness, to tribulations, to afflictions, for some time; perchance for the whole term, of this short life; but all this is but to improve us, and that we may be the fitter for him when he takes us into his own hand again, in that surrender of ourself, *in manus tuas*, when we shall deliver up our souls: to him, that gave them: for here no propriety is destroyed, still here is *meum et tuum* between God and me; it is still my soul, and still his soul; and when God looked mercifully towards Job then Satan's lease expired. God doth not give his saints for

* Qu. "Abacus."—Ed.

[4] Psalm xliv. 12.

nothing; for *Sanguis semen, The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church, and ye are bought with a price*, says the apostle[5]; it is *pretiore*, ye are preciously bought, even with the precious blood, of the only Son of God. And for our temporal and secular value, in God's account, we see how God expressed his care of the people, when he diverted Sennacherib from afflicting them, by turning him upon other wars. *I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia, and Seba for thee, because thou wast precious in my sight, and thou wast honourable, and I loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy sake*[6]. And this leads us into the second part, the consolation, that though, nay, *Because we have sold ourselves for nothing, we shall be redeemed without money.*

Into this part then, there is at first a strange entrance; therefore, that therefore, because we have sold ourselves we should be redeemed; therefore because we have been prodigal, we should be made rich. But, this therefore, this reason, relates to the price, not to the work of the redemption, because it was for nothing, that we were sold, it is without money, that we are redeemed: for, for that, there is reason in equity: but for the redemption itself, there is no therefore, no reason at all to be assigned, but only the eternal goodness of God himself, and the eternal purpose of his will: of which will of God, whosoever seeks a reason, *Aliquid majus Deo quærit*, says St. Augustine, He that seeks what persuaded or inclined the will of God, seeks for something wiser, and greater than God himself.

In this redemption then God pursues the devil, in all those steps, by which he had made his profit, of a prodigality; for, first, as we gave away ourselves, so he restores us to ourselves again. It is well expressed in the parable of the prodigal; and his case is ours. The portion which he asked of his father, was the use of his free will. God gave it him; Adam's first immortality was, *posse non mori*, he needed not to have died: it was in his own power whether he would keep a free will, or no, and he spent that stock, he lost that free will. He spent not his free will so as Bellarmin understands this spending, that that man may be said to spend his life ill, that misemploys it, but yet he

[5] 1 Cor. vi. 20. [6] Isaiah xliii. 3.

hath this life in him still: but the prodigal, Adam, spent his utterly: he spent it so, that he and we have no free will at all left. But yet; even the prodigal said, that he would return to his father, and he came; he had not only some sudden thoughts of repentance, but he put himself actually in the way: *Cum longe abesset*, says that parable, when he was a great way off, yet because he was in the way, his father met him and kissed him, and put that robe upon him, which was not only *dignitas, quam perdidit Adam*, as St. Austin qualifies it, a restitution to the same integrity, which Adam had and had lost, but that was *amictus sapientiæ*, (so St. Ambrose calls it) it was an ability to preserve himself in that integrity, to which he was restored. It was a robe that was put upon him; it was none of his own; but when it was put upon him, it rectified and restored those faculties, which were his own: as the eye sees in a man restored to life, though the soul enable the eye and not the eye itself, so the faculty of free will works in us as well as it did in Adam, though only the grace of God enable that faculty.

When God hath wrought that first cure (which he does by incorporating us in the church by baptism) that we are ourselves again, then (as in the case of prodigals in the law) as they had tutors, and curators appointed them, so he sends the Holy Ghost, to be our guardian, our curator: and as the office of that person, in that law, was double, first to reverse all contracts and bargains, which that prodigal person, in that state, had made, and secondly to inhibit, and hinder him, from making new contracts, so this blessed Spirit of consolation, by his sanctification, seals to our consciences a *quietus est*, a discharge of all former spiritual debts, he cancels all them, he nails them to the cross of Christ, and then he strengthens us against relapses into the same sins again.

He proceeds farther than this; beyond restoring us, beyond preserving us; for he betters us, he improves us, to a better condition, than we were in, at first. And this he does, first, by purging and purifying us, and then by changing, and transmuting us. He purges us by his sunshine, by his temporal blessings; for, as the greatest globes of gold lie nearest the face and top of the earth, where they have received the best concoction from the heat of the sun; so certainly, in reason, they who have had

God's continual sunshine upon them, in a prosperous fortune, should have received the best concoction, the best digestion of the testimonies of his love, and consequently be the purer, and the more refined metal. If this purging prevail not, then he comes to purge those whom he means to lay up in his treasure, with tribulation; he carries them from the sunshine into the fire, and therefore, if those tribulations fall upon thee in a great and heavy measure, think thy dross needed this vehemence, and do not make afflictions, arguments of God neglecting thee, for he that is presented to have suffered very much, is also presented to have been very righteous, that is Job; and he that was the most innocent of all, suffered most of all, Christ Jesus thy Saviour.

From this purifying comes our transmutation, that we are changed *in semen Dei*, made the seed of God: for, so God calls children that are derived from honest, and godly parents, *The seed of God*, in the prophet[7]: but more fully in the apostle, *whosoever is born of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him*[8]: for this generation, is our regeneration, *of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth*[9]: this grace makes us as properly the seed of God, as sin makes us the seed of the devil, of the serpent, and so we are expressly called in Genesis[10], and so also in the apostle's, *You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father, you will do*[11]. So we are changed in *naturam Dei*, as St Peter expresses it[12]: by his precious promises we are made partakers of the divine nature: not *Ab anteriori*, nor *à posteriori;* not that we are so derived from the nature and essence of God, as that our souls should be of his very substance, as the Manichees imagined, nor, as Origen mistook, upon misinterpreting these words to the Corinthians, *Ut Deus sit omnia in omnibus*[13], That God should be all in all, so as that at last, the whole nature of mankind, and indeed, all other natures and substances (if Origen have been rightly understood by some men near his own times) should be swallowed up, and drowned in the very substance of God himself. But this transmutation is a glorious restoring of God's image in us, and it is our conformity to him; and when

[7] Mal. ii. 15. [8] 1 John iii. 9.
[9] James i. 18. [10] Gen. iii. 15. [11] John viii. 44.
[12] 2 Pet. i. 4. [13] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

either his temporal blessings, or his afflictions, his sun, or his fire, hath tried us up to that height, to a conformity to him, then come we to that transmutation, which admits no re-transmutation, which is a modest, but infallible assurance of a final perseverance, so to be joined to the Lord, as to be one spirit with him; for as a spirit cannot be divided, so they who are thus changed into him, are so much his, so much He, as that nothing can separate them from him; and this is the ladder, by which we may try, how far we are in the way to heaven.

And when we are come to this, then we are able to see, and to consider, the poverty, and the value of him, who had before bought us, for nothing, and enthralled us. The devil is called the Lord of the world[14]; but that is, in the person of infidels; and we are none of that world. Though we have to do with principalities, and spiritual wickedness, yet St. Paul motions it thus much, *Est nobis colluctatio*, He arms us at all points, in that chapter[15], fit to endure any violent, or any long attempt, and yet he tells us, that all that we have to do with the devil, is but *colluctatio*, but a wrestling; we may be thrown, but we cannot be slain. So also is the same state of the saints of God's described, That the devil labours to devour, that he walks about, and seeks, those who are without the pale, without the church, and these that are rebellious and refractory within it, these he may devour without any resistance: they fall into his mouth; but for us, who are embraced by thy redemption, he is put to his labour, and to lose his labour too; he is put to seek, and put to miss too. He was put to sue out a commission, for Job's good; till then he confessed to God, thou hast put a hedge about him. He was put to renew this commission, for his person; touch his bones; but further he durst not ask. He hath a kingdom, but nobody knows where: I would we might still dispute, whether it were in the earth, or in the air, and not find this kingdom in our own hearts. Expel him thence; and God's spirit is as the air, that admits no vacuity, no emptiness: destroy this kingdom of Satan in yourselves, and God will establish his, God will be content with his place. Himself you cannot see; that is one degree of his tyranny, to reserve himself, and not be

[14] 2 Cor. iv. 4. [15] Ephes. vi. 10.

seen; for his deformities would make ye hate him: but in his glasses in the riches, and in the vanities of this world, you see him and know him not; you see him, and know him, and embrace him, St. Chrysostom hath convinced you, in all that can be said, for the love of this world; If thou wilt (says he) that I must therefore look after worldly things, because they are necessary, *E regione respondeo*, says he: therefore thou needest not look after them, because they are necessary: *Si essent superflua, non deberes confidere; quia sunt necessaria, non debes ambigere:* for that which is more than necessary, thou shouldest not labour, and for that which is necessary thou shouldest not doubt, for, whatsoever God does not give thee, he knows was not necessary for thee, for he can make thee happy without these temporal things, as his way in this text is, to redeem without money, which is our last circumstance.

In delivering his people out of Egypt, he gave no money for them; nay, he made them get money and jewels at their coming away. In delivering them out of Babylon, he brought them away rich; here, in this redemption, it had been bribery to have given, in so good a cause: and it had been a new kind of simony, never heard of, to give money for the exercise of their own grace. He gave no money then; not because he had it not; for *Domini est terra*, The earth and all in it, is his: *Ye have taken my silver, and my gold*, says God in one prophet[16]; and he makes his continual claim, in another, *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine*[17]. But it was God and not the devil, that was to be satisfied. In devilish trading there is no passing without money: in the temple itself there were, in the church, and church affairs there are buyers, and sellers too; if there were no buyers there would be no sellers; but there was a third sort that was whipped out too; which were changers. But in our case it was God, that was to be satisfied; and therefore we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ[18].

Now this blood of Christ Jesus was not within the compass of this word, which is here translated money: though, as I noted at

[16] Joel iii. 5. [17] Hagg. ii. 8. [18] 1 Pet. i. 19.

the beginning, this word *casaph* includes all that the heart can wish, or desire: for though the application of the blood of Christ, now that is shed is to be wished by every sinner to his own soul, though the shedding of that blood might have been wished by the patriarchs, to whom God had revealed, that in the fulness of time it should be shed, at the second coming of Christ, and the Resurrection may be wished for, by us now, yet, if we take *rem integram*, if we take the matter at first, without any such revealing of God's purpose as he in his Scripture hath afforded us; so no man might have wished, or prayed, without a greater sin in that wish and in that prayer than all his former sins, that the Son of God might come down and die for his sins: if it could possibly have fallen into his imagination, that this might have been a way for his redemption; yet he ought not to have wished that way: neither might it, neither certainly did it ever fall within the desire of any despairing sinner, that thought, that the death of Christ appertained not to him, to wish that, God the Father, or God the Holy Ghost, would come down, and become man and shed his blood for him. The blood of Christ by which we are redeemed was not this *casaph* it was not *res appetibilis*, a thing that a sinner might, or could desire to be shed for him, though being shed, he must desire, that it may be applied to him. And hence it is that some of the fathers argue, that when the devil began to tempt Christ, he knew him not to be the Son of God: for even to the devil himself, the blood of Christ could not be *res appetibilis*, a thing that deliberately he could have desired should have been shed. If the devil had considered, that the shedding of that blood, would have redeemed us, would he have hastened the shedding of that blood?

He redeemed us then without money; and as he bought so he sells: he paid no money, he asks no money: but he proclaims freely to all, *Ho every one that thirsteth come to the waters, and ye that have no silver, come, buy, and eat; come, I say, buy wine, and milk, without silver, and without money*[19]. But you must come; and you must come to the market; to the magazine of his graces, his church; and you must buy, though you have no money: he paid obedience, and he asks obedience to himself, and his church,

[19] Isaiah LV. 1.

at your hands. And then, as Joseph did to his brethren, he will give you your corn, and your money again; he will give you grace, and temporal blessings too: he will refresh and re-establish your natural faculties, and give you supernatural. He hath already done enough for all, even in his mercy, he was just; just to the devil himself: for as we had done, so he did; he gave himself; both to the first death, as long as it could hold him, and to the second death, as far as it could reach him. But though all this be already done, yet, to conclude, there is a particular circumstance of comfort, in this word, you shall be: that though the act of our redemption be past, the application is future: and in the elect and regenerate child of God, though his conscience tells him every day, that he sells away himself, yet his conscience shall tell him too, he shall be redeemed without money, he shall not perish finally: as we cannot carry our thoughts to so high a time, but that God elected us, before that, so we cannot continue our sins of infirmity so long, but that God will have mercy upon us after that: I cannot name a time, when God's love began; it is eternal: I cannot imagine a time, when his mercy will end: it is perpetual.

SERMON CXLIII.

PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, APRIL 12, 1618.

GENESIS xxxii. 10.

I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.

THIS text is in the midst of Jacob's prayer; and this prayer is in the midst of Jacob's preparation in the time of danger. His dangers were from persons near him, from his alliance, by marriage, and from his nearest kindred by blood. Laban, into whose house he had married, made advantages upon him, deluded him,

oppressed him, pursued him. And Esau his own brother lay now in his way, when he was returning from Mesopotamia to Canaan, from his father-in-law, to his natural father, from Laban, to Isaac. He had sent messengers to try his brother's disposition towards him; they returned with relation of great preparation that Esau made to come forth towards him, but whether in hostile or friendly manner, they could inform nothing. *Then was Jacob greatly afraid, and sore troubled*, but not so afraid, nor so troubled, as that he was stupefied, or negligent in providing against the imminent dangers. First then he makes as sure as he can at home; he disposes his troops, and his cattle so, as that, if his brother should come hostilely, he might do least harm. And he provides as well as he could that he should not come hostilely, he sends him presents, and he sends him respective and ceremonious messages. He neglects not the strengthening of himself, that so he might make his peace when he were able to sustain a war; he neglects not the removing of all occasions, that might submit him to a war: and in the midst of these two important and necessary cares, love of peace, and provision for war, his chief recourse is to God; to him he prays; and he prays to him first, as he was (as we may say) *Deus familiaris*, A God to his family, and race, *O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac;* and as a God, from whom this familiarity did not take away the reverence; for he adds there presently the great name of Jehovah, the Lord he presents to him his obedience to his commandment, thou saidst unto me, *Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred*, he presents to him his confidence in his promises, *Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed, as the sand of the sea;* and upon these grounds and inducements, he comes to the formal prayer, *Erue me, I pray thee deliver me from the hand of my brother;* and he prays for others as well as himself; *for I fear he will smite me, and the mothers upon the children:* he solicits God for all that are committed to him. And as in the midst of danger, he came to preparation, and in the midst of his preparations, he came to this prayer, so in the midst of this prayer, he comes to this humble and grateful consideration, that God had been already more bountiful unto him than he could have proposed to his

hopes or to his wishes, *I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.*

First then this part of the prayer, hath in it, that which is the centre and basis, and establishment of all true prayers, a disclaiming of merit; for when a man pretends merit, it is so far from a prayer, as that it is rather a challenge, an increpation, an exprobration of his slackness, to whom we speak that he gives us not without asking: I am not worthy, says Jacob. But yet though Jacob confess humbly this unworthiness in himself, yet he does not say that he is, or was nothing at all, in respect of these benefits, it is not *Nihil sum*, but, *katon, parvus sum, impar sum;* Man is no such thing as can invite God to work upon him, but he is such a thing, as nothing else is capable of his working but man. It is not much that he is; but something he is: but *parvus sum, præ omnibus, præ singulis;* whether I take myself altogether, thus grown up in honour, in office, in estate, or whether I take myself in pieces, and consider every step, that thy mighty hand hath led me; I am not worthy of all these, nor of any of these degrees; not of the least of these. Not whether I consider thy mercies, which are the promises that God makes to us at first, out of his mere gracious goodness, or whether I consider thy truth, the assuredness of those promises, to which he hath been pleased to bind himself; *non sum dignus*, not whether we consider this truth, and fidelity of God in *spe*, in our own hope, and confident, and patient expectation, that they shall be performed unto us, or whether we consider them in *re*, in our thankfulness, and experience, as truths already performed unto us; the truth which thou hast showed, for all these mercies, and all these truths, all these promises, and all these performances, as they found no title at all in me to them at first, so they imprint no other title in me by being come, but to make me his servant, to use them to his glory. *I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.* And then for a second part, all this consideration Jacob seals with a reason, *for;* it is not a fashional compli-

ment with God, it is not a sad and melancholic dejection, and undervaluing of himself; but he assigns his particular reason, and that is, what his former state was, what his present state is. *I came over Jordan*, he was forced to leave his country; and he came over it but with a staff, in a poor and ill-provided manner; and with his staff, no assistance but his own. And he returns again, there is his first comfort; and he returns now; now that God had spoken to him before he set out, and now that God had revealed to him an army of angels in his assistance, and now that God had increased his temporal state so far, as that he was become two bands, so that though he should lose much, yet he had much left.

In benefits that pass from men of higher rank, to persons of lower condition, it is not the way to get them, to ground the request upon our own merit; merit implies an obligation, that we have laid upon them; and that implies a debt. And a petition for a due debt is an affront; it is not so much a petition delivered as a writ served upon him, to call him to answer his unjust detaining of a just debt. Thus it is amongst men between whom there may be true merit; but toward God there can be none; and therefore much more their boldness to proceed with him upon pretence of merit. *Et de Deo, non tanquam ac benefico largitore, sed tanquam de tardo debitore cogitare;* That if we come not to our ends, and preferment quickly, we should give over considering God as a gracious, and free giver in his time, and begin to consider him as a slack paymaster, and ill debtor, because he pays not at our time. No man was worthy to be bidden to the supper; but those that were bidden, were not worthy[1]; that invitation made them not worthy. No spark of worth in us, before God call us; but that first grace of his, doth not presently make us worthy. If we love Christ a little and allow him his share, but love father and mother more[2], if we renounce all other love, we are not ambitious, but yet would live quiet, without troubles, without crosses, if we take not up our cross, or if we take it, and sink under it, if we do not follow, or if we follow a wrong guide, bear our afflictions with the stupidity of a stoic, or with

[1] Matt. xxii. 8. [2] Matt. xiii. 37.

the pertinacity of an heretic, if we love not Christ more than all, and take our cross, and follow, and follow him, *non digni sumus*, we are not worthy of him. Nay all this doth not make us worthy really, but imputatively; they shall be counted worthy to enjoy the next world, and the resurrection[3], says Christ. We are not worthy as to profess our unworthiness; it is a degree of spiritual exaltation, to be sensible of our lowness; I am not worthy to stoop down, and unloose his shoe-latchet, says John Baptist[4]; even humility itself is a pride, if we think it to be our own. Only say thus to Christ with the centurion, *Non dignus ut venirem*, I was not worthy to come to thee[5], *non dignus ut intres*, I was not worthy, that thou shouldst come to me, and let others say of thee, as those elders, whom the centurion sent, said of him, *Dignus est*, He is worthy, that Christ should do for him. Be thou humble in thyself, and thou shalt be worthy of a double honour; thou shall be truly worthy in the sight of man, and thou shalt be counted worthy in the sight of God.

Now for all this unworthiness, Jacob doth not so much extenuate himself, as to annihilate himself. The word is *katon;* it is not *elil*, it is *parvus sum*, not *nihil sum*. It is but little, that man is, proportioned to the working of God; but yet man is that creature, who only of all other creatures can answer the inspiration of God, when his grace comes, and exhibits acceptable service to him, and co-operate with him. No other creature is capable of grace, if it could be offered to them. It is true and useful, that Cyprian presses, *Nihil est nostrum; nam quid habes quod non accepisti*, What hast thou that thou hast not received? Here is a *nihil nostrum;* but he doth not press it so far as to say *nihil nos;* here is, a *nihil habemus*, we have nothing, but not a *nihil sumus;* That we are nothing; it is true, and useful, that Hierome says, *Ipsum meum, sine Dei semper auxilio non erit meum*[6], Without the continual concurrence of God's grace, that which is mine now, would be lost, and be none of mine; but it is as true, that Augustine says too, *Certum est nos velle et facere cum volumus et facimus*, It is we ourselves that choose, and perform those spiritual actions, which the grace of God only enables

[3] Luke xxiii. 25. [4] Mark i. 7.
[5] Luke vii. 7. [6] Hierom. Epist. i.

us to choose and perform. It is truly and elegantly said by Ambrose, of our power, and our will, *Ei committi, nihil aliud quam dimitti*, to be delivered to our own will, is to be delivered to the executioner, for *nihil habet in suis vicibus, nisi periculi facilitatem*, it had nothing in it, but a nearness of danger; but yet, God hath made a natural man only capable of his grace; and in those men, in whom he hath begun a regeneration, by his first grace, his grace proceeds not, without a co-operation of those men. This humility then is safely limited in Jacob's bounds, *parvus sum*, it is no great matter that I am; but yet come not to such a *nihil sum*, such an extenuation of thyself, as to think, that grace works upon thee, as the sun does upon gold, or precious stones, to purify them to that concoction, without any sense in themselves.

Now this littleness, how poor, and small a thing man is, appears to him, whether he consider himself *in omnibus*, or *in singulis*, as the word imports here, as he is altogether, or as he is taken asunder. Take man at his best, and greatest growth as he is honourable, for, as there is a stamp, that gives values to gold, so doth honour, and estimation to the temporal blessings of this life. Honour is that which God esteems most, and is most jealous of it in himself, his honour he will give to none, and it is the broadest, and apparentest outward seal, by which he testifies his love to man, but yet what greatness is this, in which David repeats that infirmity twice in one psalm, *Man shall not continue in honour, but is like the beasts that die: Man is in honour, and understandeth not; he is like to the beasts that perish*[7]. In nature things that are above us, show as little, as things below us; men upon a hill are as little to them in the valley, as they in the valley to them that are raised. It is so in nature; but we have forced an unnatural perverseness in ourselves, to think nothing great but that which is a great way above us; whereas if we will look downwards, and see above how many better deservers God hath raised us, we shall find at least such a greatness in ourselves, as deserves a great thanksgiving, but yet take thyself altogether at thy greatest, and say with Jacob, *parvus sum*, all this is but a little greatness, but a poor riches, but an

[7] Psalm xlix. 12.

ignoble honour. In all this, thou dost but wrap up a snowball upon a coal of fire; there is that within thee that melts thee, as fast as thou growest: thou buildest in marble, and thy soul dwells in those mud walls, that have mouldered away, ever since they were made. Take thyself altogether, and thou art but a man; and what is that: ask Aristotle, says St. Chrysostom, and he will tell thee, *animal rationale*, man is a reasonable creature; but ask God and he will tell thee, *animal irreprehensible;* a man is a good man. *There was a man in the land of Huz, called Job; an upright and just man that feared God;* all men, truly men, are copies of this man. And *sine hac humanitate*, without being such a man as he, whose man soever thou beest, and whose master, whosoever thou beest, *parvus es*, all is but a small matter, considered together, and at best.

But we may better discern ourselves in *singulis*, than in *omnibus;* better by taking ourselves in pieces, than altogether, we understand the frame of man's body, better when we see him naked, than apparelled, howsoever; and better by seeing him cut up, than by seeing him do any exercise alive; one dissection, one anatomy teaches more of that, than the marching, or drilling of a whole army of living men. Let every one of us therefore dissect and cut up himself, and consider what he was before God raised him friends to bring those abilities, and good parts, which he had, into knowledge, and into use, and into employment; what he was before he had by education, and study, and industry, imprinted those abilities in his soul; what he was before that soul was infused into him, capable of such education; what he was, when he was but in the list, and catalogue of creatures, and might have been left in the state of a worm, or a plant, or a stone; what he was, when he was not so far, but only in the vast and unexpressible, and unimaginable depth, of nothing at all. But especially let him consider, what he was when he lay smothered up in *massa damnata*, in that leavened lap of Adam, where he was wrapped up in damnation. And then let him consider forward again, that God in his decree severed him out, in that lump, and ordained him to a particular salvation; that he provided him parents, that were within the covenant, that should prepare, and pour out a body for him; that

he himself created, and infused an immortal soul into him; that then he put a care in his parents, perchance in strangers, to breed him to a capableness of some course. That then God took him by the hand, and led him into the court; that there he held him by the hand, and defended him against envy, and practice; that he hath clothed him with the opinions of good men; that he hath adorned him with riches, and with titles; let a man stand thus, and ruminate, and spell over God's several blessings to him, syllable by syllable, and he shall not only say, *Parvus sum*, when he considers himself at his growth and altogether, but *Parvus eram*, I was too mean a subject for thee to look or work upon in the least of these expressings of thy goodness.

And thus it is whether we consider this goodness of God, in *miserationibus*, in his mercies, or in *veritate*, in his truth. Not that God's mercy and truth are ever severed; but we take his mercy to be that promise, that covenant, which out of his own free goodness he was pleased to make to man, and which is grounded upon nothing, but his own pleasure, and we take truth, and fidelity, to be the performance, and execution of those merciful promises, which truth is grounded upon his promise. Now for his mercies, first, though we say as truly as school terms can reach to, *Misericordia presumit miseriam*, we can consider no mercy, till something be miserable, upon whom mercy may work, and so cannot properly place mercy in God, before the fall of man in such a respect, yet though the work of creation, were not a work of mercy, being intended only and wholly to his glory, yet to create man, in an ability to glorify him in that way, and that measure as he did, this was a work of mercy, because man had been less happy without that ability. So that of this mercy to man, of being dignified above all other creatures, in the contributing to the glory of the Creator, but especially of that mercy of electing certain men, in whom he would preserve that dignity, which others should forfeit, of this general mercy, mankind was not worthy, of this particular mercy those particular men were not worthy, for neither these men, nor this mankind, was then at all, when God had this mercy upon them.

But for our understanding the goodness of God, and thereby our own unworthiness, it appears best in the consideration of his

truth, of the performance of these his promises, for by the strength of his truth, and fidelity in God, is my soul raised to that, that that which is ordinarily, and naturally the terror of the conscience of a sinner, is the peace of mine, that which is naturally a tempest, is my calm, that which is naturally a rock to shipwreck at, is my anchor to ride out all foul weather: and that is, the justice of God; that which would shake, and shiver my conscience, if there were no mercy nor promise, settles it now, because there is a truth, that that promise shall be performed to me.

Briefly, God was merciful, it was mere mercy in him, to promise a Messias Christ Jesus, when Adam was fallen; but to give him when he had promised him, was justice, and truth, and fidelity. So that he applies Christ Jesus to me by the working of his blessed Spirit, this is mere mercy; but that when Christ is thus applied to me, I have peace of conscience and an inchoation of the kingdom of heaven here, this is his justice, and truth, and fidelity: so that the next, and immediate resting-place for my salvation, and my peace, is the justice of God. Now, for the expressing of his largeness, in exhibiting to us those blessings, which belong to this promise, it is an useful consideration, which arises out of that miraculous budding of the rods of the twelve tribes[8]: God's promise goes no farther, but that, for that man whom he would choose *virga germinabit:* his rod should bud forth; but when Moses on the morrow went to look how his promise was performed, Levi's rod had budded, and blossomed, and borne perfect fruit; in his mercies, he exceeds his promises; in his judgments he contracts them; as we see he contracted David's pestilence of three days, into less than one. He punishes to the third, and fourth generation; but he shows mercy unto thousands[9]. He gives more than he promises; and he does it sooner; as St. Chrysostom observes: That whereas man's fashion is to demolish and pull down that in one day, which spent many months in the setting up, God dispatches faster in his building, and reparation, than in his ruin and destruction; He built all the world in six days, (says he) and when he would destroy but one town, Jericho, he employed eight; consider him then *in*

[8] Numb. xvii. [9] Exodus xx.

miserationibus, in his mercies, or in *veritate* in his truth, and wherein were we worthy of the least of these promises, or performances.

Now, of these mercies grounded upon God's will, and of these truths grounded upon his word, we must necessarily acknowledge an unworthiness in ourselves, if they were proposed to us, but as expectancies, but as reversions, that should be had; nay but as possibilities, that they might be had: for *Perdidimus possibilitatem boni*[10]; that is our case now; that we have lost all possibility of doing, or receiving any good of ourselves. In decimations upon popular rebellions, when they tithe men for execution, every man conceives a just hope; for it is ten to one he may escape with his life. In lotteries, though the odds be great on the other side, every man hopes, he that is never so far off in a remainder for land, would be loth to have his name expunged, and rased out. He that had been sick thirty-eight years, and could never get into the pool, yet he came still in hope that he should get in at last: it is thus in civil and moral things; it is much more so in divine; even expectation, from God, is a degree of fruition. There is no pain in David's expectance, *expectabo Dominum*[11], in waiting patiently for the Lord, as long as we know, Habakkuk's *veniens veniet Dominus*, Because the Lord will surely come, says he, therefore he does not tarry. It is no loss to stay God's coming, because God will stay when he comes: when we are sure that God will come to succour us, to weaken our enemies, that is a mercy, and that is a truth, which we are not worthy of though he be not come yet.

But Jacob considers here, and every man may in his particular, the mercies, and truths which God had showed him already; neither doth the word which both our translations have accepted here, answer the original nor reach home. It is not only, showing; God may show mercy, and truth, by way of offering it, and withdraw it again, as he doth from unworthy receivers of the sacrament; he may show it, by way of example; and encourage us by seeing how he hath dealt with others; he may show it, and exclude us from it; as he showed Moses the land of promise. But there it is only *videre fecit*[12], but here it

[10] Augustine. [11] Psalm XL. 2, 3. [12] Deut. xxxiv.

is *fecit* itself; there it was a land which God showed, here it is mercies, and truths, *quas fecisti*, which thou hast done, and performed towards me; and then comes David especially to his *quid retribuam tibi*, when he considers *omnia quæ tribuisti mihi. Thine O Lord*, says he, *is greatness, and power, and glory and victory and praise; all that is in heaven, and earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, riches, and honour come of thee, in thy hand it is to make great, and to give strengths*[13]*: But who am I* said David, *and what is my people, that we should be able to offer willingly, after this sort? All things came from thee; and of thine own hand, have we given thee;* why thus much was David, thus much was his people, thus much are all they, to whom God hath done so, in mercy, and in truth, and hath made gracious promises, and performed them, that they are thereby become debtors to God; his stewards his servants; which is Jacob's last step in this part, mercies and truths which thou hast showed, to thy servant.

All this greatness, makes him not proud: for all this he is not the less his servant, whose service is perfect freedom. Here men that serve inferior masters, when they mend in their estate, or in their capacity, they affect higher services, and at last the king's; when they are here, they can serve no better master, but they may serve him, in a better, and better place; if thou have served the world, and mammon, all this while, yet now that thou hast wherewithal, come into God's service; show thy love to God, in employing that which thou hast, to his glory; if thou gottest that which thou hast, in his service, (as if thou gottest it by honest ways, in thy calling, thou hast done so) yet come to serve him in a better place; in gathering, thou hast but served him in his mines, in distributing thou shalt serve him in his treasury. If thou have served him in fetters, *Noli timere serve compedite, sed confitere Domino, et vertentur in ornamenta*[14]*;* let not thy fetters, thy narrow fortune, terrify thee; thy fetters, thy low estate, shall be rings, and collars, and garters, not only sufficiencies, but abundance, and ornaments to thee, what dishes soever he set before thee, still let this be thy grace, *Parvus sum, I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth*

[13] 1 Chron. xxix. 14.

[14] Augustine.

which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.

We have passed through all the branches, of that which we proposed for the first part, the confession of his own unworthiness. We found a second part implied in this word, *for;* which was, that this acknowledgment of his proceeded not out of formality and custom, or stupidity, and dejection, but out of debatement, and consideration and reason; and then we found that reason deduced and derived into these two great branches, what his former state had been, *With my staff I passed over this Jordan*, and what his present state was, *I am become two bands*, for the reason in general, he that does any spiritual duty even towards God, in praising, and magnifying him, and not upon good reason, this man flatters God; not that he can say more good, than is always true of God; but towards God, as well as towards man, it is true, that he that speaks more good than himself believes to be true, he flatters, how true soever it be that he speaks. *Such praise shall be counted as a curse, and such oil breaks a man's head*[15]. Those sceptic philosophers, that doubted of all, though they affirmed nothing, yet they denied nothing neither, but they saw no reason in the opinions of others.

Those sceptic Christians, that doubt whether God have any particular providence, any care of particular actions, those which doubt whether the history of Christ be true, or no, those doubting men, that conform themselves outwardly with us, because that may be true, that we profess, for anything they know, there may be a Christ, and they might be the worse, for anything they know, if they left him out, they might prove worse, and in the meantime they enjoy temporal peace, and benefit of the laws by this outward profession of theirs, those men that sacrifice to Christ Jesus only, *ne noceat*, lest if there be such a God, they should lose him for want of a sacrifice, that worship Christ Jesus with a reservation, of the pretended God, that if he prove God at last, they have done their part, if he do not, yet they are never the worse, these men, who if they come to church, think themselves safe enough, but they are deceived; the Militant, and the Triumphant church is all one church, but above in the Triumphant

[15] Prov. xxvii. 14.

church, there are other churchwardens, than here, and though he come to do the outward acts of religion, if he do it without a religious heart they know him to be a recusant, for all his coming to church here, he shall be excommunicate in the Triumphant there. He praises not God, he prays not to God, he worships him not, whatsoever he does, if he have not considered it, debated it, concluded it, to be rightly done, and necessarily done. If he think anything else better done, this is not well done.

Jacob had concluded it out of the contemplation of his former, and present state; first he had been banished from his country; *I came over Jordan*, herein he was a figure of Christ; he received a blessing from his father, and presently he must go into banishment; Christ received presents and adoration from the Magi of the East, and presently he submits himself to a banishment in Egypt, for the danger that Herod intended. Christ's banishment, as it could not be less than four years, so it could not be more than seven; Jacob's was twenty, a banishment, and a long banishment. Banishment is the first punishment executed upon man; he was banished out of paradise; and it is the last punishment, that we shall be redeemed from, when we shall be received entirely body and soul, into our country, into heaven. It is true our life in this world is not called a banishment any where in the Scripture: but a pilgrimage, a peregrination, a travel; but *peregrinatio cum ignominia conjuncta, exilium;* he that leaves his country because he was ashamed, or afraid to return to it, or to stay in it, is a banished man. Briefly for Jacob's case here, St. Bernard expresses it well in his own, *Est commune exilium*, There is one banishment common to us all, *in corpore peregrinamur a Domino*, we travel out of our country at least; but, *Accessit et speciale, quod me pene inpatientem reddit quod cogar vivere sine vobis*, This was a particular misery, in his banishment, that Jacob must live from his father, and mother, and from that country, where he was to have the fruits, and effects of that blessing which he had got.

He came away then, and he came away poor: *in baculo* with a staff; God expresses sometimes abundance, and strength, *in baculo*, in that word. Oftentimes he calls plenty, by that name, the staff of bread. But Jacob's is no metaphorical staff, it is a

real staff, the companion, and the support of a poor travelling man. When Christ enjoins his apostles to an exact poverty, for one journey, which they were to despatch quickly, St. Matthew expresses his commandment thus, Possess no monies, nor two coats, nor a shoe, nor a staff: St. Mark expresses the same commandment thus, Take none of those with you, except a staff only. The fathers go about to reconcile this, by taking staff in both places figuratively; that the staff forbidden in Matthew, should be *potestas puniendi*, the power of correcting which the apostle speaks of, *Numquid vultis veniam in virga*[16]*? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love?* and that the staff allowed in Mark, is *potestas consolandi*, the power of comforting which David speaks of, *Virga tua, et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt, Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me*[17]. Christ spoke this but once, but in his language, the Syriac, he spoke it in a word that hath two significations, *shebat*, is both *baculus defensorius*, and *baculus sustentatorius*. A staff of sustentation, and a staff of defence; God that spoke in Christ's Syriac, spoke in the evangelists' Greek too; and both belong to us; and both the evangelists intending the use of the staff, and not the staff itself, St. Matthew in that word forbids any staff, of violence or defence, St. Mark allows a staff of sustentation, and support; and such a staff, and no more had Jacob, a staff to sustain him upon his way. Hath this then been thy state with Jacob, that thou hast not only been without the staff of bread, plenty, and abundance of temporal blessings, but without the staff of defence, that when the world hath snarled and barked at thee, and that thou wouldest justly have beaten a dog, yet thou couldst not find a staff, thou hast no means to right thyself; yet he hath not left thee without a staff of support, a staff to try how deep the waters be, that thou art to wade through, that is, thy Christian constancy, and thy Christian discretion: use that staff aright, and as Christ, who sent his apostles without any staff of defence once, afterward gave them leave to carry swords[18], so at his pleasure, and in his measure, he will make thy staff, a sword, by giving thee means to defend thyself, and others over whom he will give thee charge, and jurisdiction in exalting thee.

[16] 1 Cor. iv. xxi. [17] Psalm xxiii. 4. [18] Luke xxii. 36.

But herein in doing so, God assists thee with the staff of others; with the favour and support of other men; Jacob was first in *baculo*, and in *suo*, nothing but a staff; no staff but his own; truly his own for we call other staffs ours, which are not ours, *My people ask counsel of their stocks, and their staff teacheth them*[19]; that is, they have made their own wisdom, their own plots, their own industry, their staff; upon which they should not rely, and so we trust to a broken staff of reed, on which, if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it[20], when God hath given thee a staff of thine own, a leading staff, a competency, a conveniency to lead thee through the difficulties, and encumbrances of this world, if thou put a pike into thy staff, murmuring at thine own, envying superiors, oppressing inferiors, then this piked staff is not thy staff, nor God's staff, but it is *baculus inimici hominis*; and the envious man in the Gospel, is the devil. If God have made thy staff to blossom, and bear ripe fruit in a night, enriched thee, preferred thee a pace, this is not thy staff; it is a mace, and a mark of thy office, that he hath made thee his steward of those blessings. To end this, a man's own staff, truly, properly, is nothing but his own natural faculties: nature is ours, but grace is not ours; and he that is left to this staff of his own, for heaven, is as ill provided, as Jacob was, for this world, when he was left to his own staff at Jordan, when he was banished; and banished in poverty, and banished alone.

Thus far we have seen Jacob in his low estate; now we bring him to his happiness: in which it is always one degree to make haste; and so we will; all is comprised in this that is, was present. Now I am two bands, now; it was first now, *quando revertitur*, now when he returned to his country, for he was come very near it, when he speaks of Jordan, as though he stood by it, I came over this Jordan. It is hard to say, whether the returning to a blessing, formerly possessed, and lost for a while, be not a greater pleasure, than the coming to a new one. It is St. Augustine's observation, that that land, which is so often called the land of promise, was their land from the beginning, from the beginning Sem, of whom they came, dwelt there: and though God restored them by a miraculous power, to their possession, yet still

[19] Hosea iv. 12. [20] 2 Kings xviii. 21.

it was a returning: and so the blessing is evermore expressed; a return from Egypt, a return from Babylon; and a return from their present dispersion is that, which comforts them still, Christ himself had this apprehension, *Clarifica me*, Glorify me thou Father, with that glory, which I had with thee before the world was[21]. Certainly our best assurance of salvation, is but a returning to our first state, in the decree of God for our election; when we can consider, our interest, in that decree we return. Our best state in this life, is but a returning, to the purity, which we had in our baptism; whosoever surprises himself in the act or in the remorse of any sin that he is fallen into, would think himself in a blessed state, if he could bring his conscience to that peace again, which he remembers, he had the last time he made up his accounts to God, and had his discharge sealed in the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ Jesus. Cleanse thyself often therefore, and accustom thy soul to that peace, that thou mayest still, when thou fallest into sin, have such a state in thy memory, as thou mayest have a desire to return to: and the Spirit of God shall still return to thee, who lovest to receive it, and at last thy spirit, shall return to him that gave it[22], and gave his own Spirit for it.

Jacob's happiness appears first now, *quando revertitur;* and now, *quando jubente Domino*, now, when he returned, and now when he returned upon God's bidding, God had said unto him, Turn again into the land of thy fathers, and I will be with thee[23], think no step to be directly made towards preferment, if thou have not heard God's voice directing the way. *Stare in usque;* stand upon the ways, and inquire not of thy fathers, but of the God of thy fathers, which way thou shalt go: for God's voice may be heard in every action, if we will stand still a little, and hearken to it. Remember evermore, that *applica ephod;* where David comes to ask counsel of the Lord, he said to Abiathar[24], *Applica ephod;* Bring the ephod; and there David asks, *Shall I follow this company, shall I overtake them?* When thou doubtest of anything, *applica ephod*, take this book of God: if, to thine understanding, that reach not home punctually to thy

[21] John xvii. 5. [22] Eccles. xii. 7. [23] Gen. xxxi. 3.
[24] 1 Sam. xxx. 7.

particular case, thou hast an ephod in thyself; God is not departed from thee; thou knowest by thyself, it is a vain complaint that Plutarch makes, *de defectu oraculorum;* that oracles are ceased; there is no defect of oracles in thine own bosom; as soon as thou askest thyself, How may I corrupt the integrity of such a judge, undermine the strength of such a great person, shake the chastity of such a woman, thou hast an answer quickly, It must be done by bribing, it must be done by swearing, it must be done by calumniating. Here is no *defectus oraculorum*, no ceasing of oracles, there is a present answer from the devil. There is no defect of the *urim*, and *thummim* of God neither, if thou wilt look into it, for as it is well said of the moral man, *Sua cuique providentia Deus*, Every man's diligence, and discretion, is a God to himself so it is well said, of the Christian father Augustine, *Recta ratio verbum Dei*, A rectified conscience is the word of God. *Applica ephod*, bring thine actions to the question of the ephod, to the debatement of thy conscience rectified, and thou still shalt hear, *Jubentem Dominum* or *Dominum* revocantem*, God will bid thee stop, or God will bid thee go forwards in that way.

But herein had Jacob another degree of happiness, that the commandment of God, was pursued with the testimony of angels. Not that the voice of God needs strength; *teste me ipso*, witness myself, was always witness enough; and *quia os Domini locutum*. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it: was always seal enough. But that hath been God's abundant, and overflowing goodness, ever to succour the infirmity of man, with sensible and visible things; with the pillars in the wilderness; with the tabernacle after; and with the temple and all the mysterious, and significative furniture thereof after all. So God leaves not Jacob to the general knowledge, that the angels of God protect God's children, but he manifested those angels unto him, *occurrerunt ei*, the angels of God met him. The word of God is an infallible guide to thee, but God hath provided thee also visible, and manifest assistants, the pillar, his church, and the angels, his ministers in the church. The Scripture is thine

* Where I have placed this second *Dominum*, the folio edition has "*duni*," arising, I suppose, from the contraction *dn̄m*. *Duo* has twice before in this sermon been printed in the folio edition for *Domino*.—Ed.

only ephod, but *applica ephod*, apply it to thee by his church, and by his visible angels, and not by thine own private interpretation.

This was Jacob's *nunc;* now, when he was returned, returned upon God's commandments; upon God's commandment pursued, and testified by angels; and angels visibly manifested, now, he could take a comfort in the contemplation of his fortune, of his estate, to see, that he was two bands. Here is a great change; we see his vow; and we see how far his wishes extended at his going out; *If God will give me bread to eat, and clothes to put on, so that I come again unto my father's house in safety, then shall the Lord be my God*[25]. In which vow is included all the service that he could exhibit, or retribute to God. Now his staff is become a sword; a strong army; his one staff now is multiplied; his wives are given for staves to assist him; and his children given also for staves to his age. His own staff is become the greatest, and best part of Laban's wealth; in such plenty, as that he could spare a present to Esau, of at least five hundred head of cattle. The fathers make moral expositions of this; that his two bands are his temporal blessings and his spiritual. And St. Augustine finds a typical allusion in it of Christ, *Baculo crucis Christus apprehendit mundum, et cum duabus turmis, duobus populis, ad patrem rediit*, Christ by his staff, his cross, musters two bands, that is, Jews and Gentiles, we find enough for our purpose in taking it literally; as we see it in the text; that he divided all his company, and all his cattle into two troops, that if Esau come, and smite one, the other might escape. For then only is a fortune full, when there is something for leakage, for waste; when a man, though he may justly fear, that this shall be taken from him, yet he may justly presume, that this shall be left to him; though he lose much, yet he shall have enough. And this was Jacob's increase and height; and from this lowness; from one staff, to two bands. And therefore, since in God we can consider but one state, *semper idem*, immutable; since in the devil, we can consider but two states, *quomodo cecidit filius orientis*, that he was the son of the morning, but is, and shall ever be for ever the child of everlasting death; since in Jacob

[25] Gen. xxviii. 20.

and in ourselves we can consider first, that God made man righteous, secondly that man betook himself to his one staff, and his own staff, the imaginations of his own heart, thirdly, that by the word of God manifested by his angels, he returns with two bands, body and soul, to his heavenly Father again, let us attribute all to his goodness, and confess to him and the world, *That we are not worthy of the least of all his mercies, and of all the truth which he hath showed unto his servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.*

SERMON CXLIV.

PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, APRIL 19, 1618.

1 TIMOTHY i. 15.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of which I am the chiefest.

THE greatest part of the body of the Old Testament is prophecy, and that is especially of future things: the greatest part of the New Testament, if we number the pieces, is epistles, relations of things past, for instruction of the present. They err not much, that call the whole New Testament Epistle: for even the Gospels are *evangelia*, good messages, and that is proper to an epistle, and the Book of the Acts of the Apostles is superscribed, by St. Luke, to one person, to Theophilus, and that is proper to an epistle; and so is the last book, the Book of Revelation, to the several churches; and of the rest there is no question. An epistle is *collocutio scripta*, says St. Ambrose, though it be written far off, and sent, yet it is a conference, and *separatos copulat*, says he; by this means we overcome distances, we deceive absences, and we are together even then when we are asunder: and therefore, in this kind of conveying spiritual comfort to their friends, have the ancient fathers been more exercised than in any other form, almost all of them have written epistles: one of them, Isidorus, him whom we call Pelusiotes,

St. Chrysostom's scholar, is noted[1] to have written myriads, and in those epistles, to have interpreted the whole Scriptures: St. Paul gave them the example, he writ nothing but in this kind, and in this exceeded all his fellow apostles, *et pateretur Paulus, quod Saulus fecerit*, says St. Austin, that as he had asked letters of commission of the state to persecute Christians, so by these letters of consolation, he might recompense that church again, which he had so much damnified before: as the Hebrew rabbins say, That Rahab did let down Joshua's spies, out of her house, with the same cord, with which she had used formerly to draw up her adulterous lovers, into her house. Now the Holy Ghost was in all the authors, of all the books of the Bible, but in St. Paul's Epistles, there is, says Irenæus, *Impetus Spiritus Sancti*, The vehemence, the force of the Holy Ghost; and as that vehemence is in all his epistles, so *Amplius habent, quæ è vinculis*, (as St. Chrysostom makes the observation) those epistles which were written in prison, have most of his holy vehemence, and this (as that father notes also) is one of them; and of all them, we may justly conceive this to be the most vehement and forcible, in which he undertakes to instruct a bishop in his episcopal function, which is, to propagate the Gospel; for, he is but an ill bishop that leaves Christ where he found him, in whose time the Gospel is yet no farther than it was; how much worse is he, in whose time the Gospel loses ground; who leaves not the Gospel in so good state as he found it. Now of this Gospel, here recommended by Paul to Timothy, this is the sum; *That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*, &c.

Here then we shall have these three parts; first *radicem*, the root of the Gospel, from whence it springs; it is, *fidelis sermo* a faithful word, which cannot err: and secondly, we have *arborem, corpus;* the tree, the body, the substance of the Gospel, that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;* and then lastly, *fructum Evangelii*, the fruit of the Gospel, humility, that it brings them who embrace it, to acknowledge themselves to be the greatest sinners. And in the first of these, the root itself, we shall pass by these steps: first, that it is *sermo*, the word; that the Gospel hath as good a ground as the law; the New Testament,

[1] Nicephorus.

as well founded as the Old; it is the word of God: and then it is *fidelis sermo*, a faithful word: now both Old and New are so, and equally so; but in this, the Gospel is *fidelior*, the more faithful, and the more sure, because that word, the law, hath had a determination, an expiration, but the Gospel shall never have that. And again, it is *sermo omni acceptatione dignus*, worthy of all acceptation; not only worthy to be received by our faith, but even by our reason too; our reason cannot hold out against the proofs of Christians for their Gospel: and as the word imports it deserves *omnem acceptationem*, and *omnem approbationem*, all approbation, and therefore, as we should not dispute against it, and so are bound to accept it, to receive it, not to speak against it; so neither should we do any thing against it; as we are bound to receive it by acknowledgment, so we are bound to approve it, by conforming ourselves unto it; our consent to it shows our acceptation, our life our approbation; and so much is in the first part, the root; *This is a faithful word, and worthy of all acceptation.* And in the second, the tree, the body, the substance of the Gospel; that *Jesus Christ is come into the world to save sinners;* first, here is an *advent*, a coming of a new person into the world who was not here before, *venit in mundum*, he came into the world; and secondly, he that came, is first Christ, a mixed person, God and man, and thereby capable of that office, able to reconcile God and man; and *Christus* so too, a person anointed, appointed, and sent for that purpose, to reconcile God and man; and then he is Jesus, one who did actually and really do the office of a Saviour, he did reconcile God and man; for there we see also the reason why he came; he came to save, and whom he came to save; to save sinners: and these will be the branches and limbs of this body. And then lastly, when we come to consider the fruit, which is indeed the seed, and kernel, and soul of all virtues, humility; then we shall meet the apostle confessing himself to be the greatest sinner, not only with a *fui*, that he was so whilst he was a persecutor, but with a present *sum*, that even now, after he had received the faithful word, the light of the Gospel, yet he was still the greatest sinner; of which (sinners) I (though an apostle) am (am still) the chiefest.

First then, the Gospel is founded and rooted *in sermone*, *in*

verbo, in the word; it cannot deserve *omnem acceptationem*, if it be not Gospel, and it is not Gospel, if it be not *in sermone*, rooted in the word: Christ himself, as he hath an eternal generation, is *verbum Dei*, himself is the word of God; and as he hath a human generation, he is *subjectum verbi Dei*, the subject of the word of God, of all the Scriptures, of all that was shadowed in the types, and figured in the ceremonies, and prepared in the preventions of the law of all that was foretold by the prophets, of all that the soul of man rejoiced in, and congratulated with the Spirit of God, in the Psalms, and in the Canticles, and in the cheerful parts of spiritual joy and exultation, which we have in the Scriptures; Christ is the foundation of all those Scriptures Christ is the burden of all those songs; Christ was *in sermone* then, then he was in the word. The joy of those holy persons which are noted in the Scriptures, to have expressed their joy at the birth of Christ, in such spiritual hymns and songs, is expressed so, as that we may see their joy was in this; that that was now *in actu*, that was performed, that was done which was before *in sermone*, in the promise, in the word, in the covenant of God. They rejoiced that Christ was born; but principally that all was done so, *sicut locutus*, as God had spoken before, that all should be done; done of the seed of a woman, as God had said in Paradise, done by a Virgin, as God had said by Esay, done at Bethlehem, as he had said by Micah; and done at that time, as he had said by Daniel; *Sicut locutus est*, says Zachary, in his exultation, All is performed as he hath spoke by the mouth of the prophets, which have been since the world began. There in the word, the Gospel begins, and there, and there only, it shall continue for ever, as long as there is any spiritual seed of Abraham, any men willing to embrace it, and apply it, as the blessed Virgin expresses it, when *her soul magnifies the Lord, and her spirit rejoices in God her Saviour; sicut locutus*, as God hath spoken to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever: so then there never was, there never must be any other Gospel than is *in sermone*, in the written word of God in the Scriptures. The particular comfort that a Christian conceives, as it is determined and contracted in himself, is principally in this, that Christ is come; his comfort is in this, that he is now saved by him; and he might have this comfort,

though Christ had never been *in sermone*, though he had never been prophesied, never spoken of before: but yet the proof and ground of this comfort to himself, that is, the assurance that he hath, that this was that Christ that was to save us; and then, the munition and artillery by which he is to overthrow the forces of the enemy, the arguments and objections of Jews, Gentiles, and heretics, who deny this Christ in whose salvation he trusts, to have then any such Saviour: and then the band of the church, the communion of saints, by which we should prove, that the patriarchs and the apostles, our fathers in the Old and New Testament, do belong all to one church; this assurance in ourself; this ability to prove it to others; this joining of these two walls, to make up the household of the faithful: this is not only that, that the sun of the Gospel is risen, in that Christ is come, but in this, that he is come *sicut locutus est*, as God had spoken of him, and promised him by the mouth of his prophets from the beginning, as he was *in sermone*, in the word.

In the first creation, when God made heaven and earth, that making was not *in sermone*, for that could not be prophesied before, because there was no being before; neither is it said, that at that creation God said any thing, but only *creavit*, God made heaven and earth, and no men; so that that which was made *sine sermone*, without speaking, was only matter without form, heaven without light, and earth without any productive virtue or disposition, to bring forth, and to nourish creatures. But when God came to those specific forms, and to those creatures wherein he would be sensibly glorified after, they were made *in sermone*, by his word: *Dixit et facta sunt*, God spake, and so all things were made; light and firmament, land and sea, plants and beasts, and fishes and fowls were made all *in sermone*, by his word. But when God came to the best of his creatures, to man, man was not only made *in verbo*, as the rest were, by speaking a word, but by a consultation, by a conference, by a counsel, *Faciamus hominem*, Let us make man; there is a more express manifestation of divers persons speaking together, of a concurrence of the Trinity; and not of a saying only, but a mutual saying; not of a proposition only, but of a dialogue in the making of man: the making of matter alone was *sine verbo*, without any word at

all; the making of lesser creatures was *in verbo*, by saying, by speaking; the making of man was *in sermone*, in a consultation. In this first creation thus presented there is a shadow, a representation of our second creation, our regeneration in Christ, and of the saving knowledge of God; for first there is in man a knowledge of God, *sine sermone*, without his word, in the book of creatures: *Non sunt loquelæ*, says David, *They have no language, they have no speech, and yet they declare the glory of God*[1]. The correspondence and relation of all parts of nature to one Author, the consinuity and dependance of every piece and joint of this frame of the world, the admirable order, the immutable succession, the lively and certain generation, and birth of effects from their parents, the causes: in all these, though there be no sound, no voice, yet we may even see that it is an excellent song, an admirable piece of music and harmony; and that God does (as it were) play upon this organ in his administration and providence by natural means and instruments; and so there is some kind of creation in us, some knowledge of God imprinted, *sine sermone*, without any relation to his word. But this is a creation as of heaven and earth, which were dark and empty, and without form, till the Spirit of God moved, and till God spoke: till there came the Spirit, the breath of God's mouth, the word of God, it is but a faint twilight, it is but an uncertain glimmering which we have of God in the creature: but *in sermone*, in his word, when we come to him in his Scriptures, we find better and nobler creatures produced in us, clearer notions of God, and more evident manifestations of his power, and of his goodness towards us: for if we consider him in his first word, *sicut locutus ab initio*, as he spoke from the beginning in the Old Testament, from thence we cannot only see, but feel and apply a *Dixit, fiat lux*, that God had said, *Let there be light;* and that there is a light produced in us, by which we see, that this world was not made by chance, for then it could not consist in this order and regularity; and we see that it was not eternal, for if it were eternal as God, and so no creature, then it must be God too; we see it had a beginning, a beginning of nothing, and all from God. So we find in ourself a *fiat lux*, that there is such a light produced: and there

[1] Psalm xix. 3.

we may find a *fiat firmamentum*, that there is a kind of firmament produced in us, a knowledge of a difference between heaven and earth; and that there is in our constitutions an earthly part, a body, and a heavenly part, a soul, and an understanding as a firmament, to separate, distinguish and discern between these. So also may we find a *congregentur aquæ*, that God hath said, Let there be a sea, a gathering, a confluence of all such means as are necessary for the attaining of salvation; that is, that God from the beginning settled and established a church, in which he was always careful to minister to man means of eternal happiness: the church is that sea, and into that sea we launched the water of baptism. To contract this *sine sermone*, till God spake, in his creatures only, we have but a faint and uncertain, and general knowledge of God: *in sermone*, when God comes to speak at first in the Old Testament, though he come to more particulars, yet it was in dark speeches, and in veils, and to them who understood best, and saw clearest into God's word; still it was but *de futuro*, by way of promise, and of a future thing. But when God comes to his last work, to make man, to make up man, that is, to make man a Christian by the Gospel, when he comes not to a *fiat homo*, let there be a man (as he proceeded in the rest) but to a *faciamus hominem*, let us make man: then he calls his son to him, and sends him into the world to suffer death, the death of the cross for our salvation: and he calls the Holy Ghost to him, and sends him to teach us all truth, and apply that which Christ suffered for our souls, to our souls. God leaves the nations, the Gentiles, under the *non locutus est;* he speaks not at all to them, but in the speechless creatures: he leaves the Jews under the *locutus est*, under the killing letter of the law, and their stubborn perverting thereof: and he comes to us, *sicut locutus est*, in manifesting to us that our Messias, Christ Jesus, is come, and come according to the promise of God, and the foretelling of all his prophets; for that is our safe anchorage in all storms, that our Gospel is *in sermone*, that all things are done, so as God had foretold they should be done; that we have infallible marks given us before, by which we may try all that is done after.

All the word of God then conduces to the Gospel; the Old

Testament is a preparation and a pædagogy to the New. All the word belongs to the Gospel, and all the Gospel is in the word; nothing is to be obtruded to our faith as necessary to our salvation, except it be rooted in the word. And as the *locutus est*, that is, the promises that God hath made to us in the Old Testament; and the *sicut locutus est*, that is, the accomplishing of those promises to us in the New Testament, are thus appliable to us; so is this especially, *Quod adhuc loquitur*, that God continues his speech, and speaks to us every day; still we must hear *evangelium in sermone*, the Gospel in the word, in the word so as we may hear it, that is, the word preached; for howsoever it be Gospel in itself, it is not Gospel to us if it be not preached in the congregation; neither, though it be preached to the congregation, is it Gospel to me, except I find it work upon my understanding and my faith, and my conscience: a man may believe that there shall be a Redeemer, and he may give an historical assent, that there hath been a Redeemer, that that Redeemer is come, he may have heard *utrumque sermonem*, both God's ways of speaking, both his voices, both his languages; his promises in the Old Testament, his performances in the New Testament, and yet not hear him speak to his own soul: *Ferme apostoli plus laborarunt*, says St. Chrysostom, It cost the apostles, and their successors, the preachers of the Gospel, more pains and more labour, *ut persuaderent hominibus, dona Dei iis indulta*, to persuade men that this mercy of God, and these merits of Christ Jesus were intended to them, and directed upon them, in particular, than to persuade them that such things were done: they can believe the promise, and the performance in the general, but they cannot find the application thereof in particular; the voice that is nearest us we least hear, not because God speaks not loud enough, but because we stop our ears; nor that neither; for we do hear, but because we do not hearken then, nor consider; no nor that neither, but because we do not answer, nor co-operate, nor assist God, in doing that which he hath made us able to do, by his grace towards our own salvation. For (not to judge *de iis qui foris sunt*) of those whom God hath left (for anything we know) in the dark, and without means of salvation, because without manifestation of Christ; we are Christians incorporated in Christ

in his church; and thereby, by that title, we have a new creation, and are new creatures; and as we shall have a new Jerusalem hereafter, so we have a new paradise already, which is the Christian church. In this paradise, saith St. Augustine, *Quatuor Evangelia ligna fructifera;* In the books of the Gospel, as they grow, and as they are supplicated in the church, grows every tree pleasant for the sight, and good for meat: and there, says that father, *Lignum vitæ Christus*, Christ Jesus himself (as he is taught he that gives life to all our actions; and even so our faith itself, which faith qualifies and dignifies those actions: and then, says from the Scriptures, in the church) is the Tree of life, for it is he, as Christ alone, in this paradise, that is, the Christian church, is this Tree of life, so *lignum scientiæ boni et mali*, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, is *proprium voluntatis arbitrium*, the good use of our own will, after God hath enlightened us in this paradise, in the Christian church, and so restored our dead will again, by his grace precedent and subsequent, and concomitant: for, without such grace and such succession of grace, our will is so far unable to pre-dispose itself to any good, as that *nec seipso homo, nisi perniciose, uti potest* (says he still) We have no interest in ourselves no power to do anything of, or with ourselves, but to our destruction. Miserable man! a toad is a bag of poison, and a spider is a blister of poison, and yet a toad and a spider cannot poison themselves; man hath a drachm of poison, original sin, in an invisible corner, we know not where, and he cannot choose but poison himself and all his actions with that; we are so far from being able to begin without grace, as then where we have the first grace, we cannot proceed to the use of that, without more. But yet, says St. Augustine, the will of a Christian, so rectified and so assisted, is *lignum scientiæ*, the tree of knowledge, and he shall be the worse for knowing, if he live not according to that knowledge; we were all wrapped up in the first Adam, all mankind; and we are wrapped up in the second Adam, in Christ, all mankind too; but not in both alike; for we are so in the first Adam, as that we inherit death from him, and incur death whether we will or no; before any consent of ours be actually given to any sin, we are the children of wrath, and of death; but we are not so in the second Adam, as that we

are made possessors of eternal life, without the concurrence of our own will; not that our will pays one penny towards this purchase, but our will may forfeit it; it cannot adopt us, but it may disinherit us. Now, by being planted in this paradise, and received into the Christian church, we are the adopted sons of God, and therefore, as it is in Christ, who is the natural Son of God, *Qui non nascitur et desinit*, as Origen expresses it, He was not born once and no more, but hath a continual, because an eternal generation, and is as much begotten to-day, as he was an hundred thousand thousand millions of generations passed; so since we are the generation and offspring of God, since grace is our father, that parent that begets all goodness in us, *In similitudine ejus*, says Origen, Conformable to the pattern Christ himself, *qui non nascitur et desinit*, who hath a continual generation, *generemur Domino per singulos intellectus, et singula opera*, in all the acts of our understanding, and in a ready concurrence of our will, let us every day, every minute feel this new generation of spiritual children; for it is a miserable short life, to have been born when the glass was turned, and died before it was run out: to have conceived some good motions at the beginning, and to have given over all purpose of practice at the end of a sermon. Let us present our own will as a mother to the Father of light, and the Father of life, and the Father of love, that we may be willing to conceive by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and not resist his working upon our souls; but with the obedience of the blessed Virgin, may say, *Ecce ancilla*, Behold the servant of the Lord, *fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*, be it done unto me according to thy word; I will not stop mine ears to thy word, my heart shall not doubt of thy word, my life shall express my having heard and hearkened to thy word, that word which is the Gospel, that Gospel which is peace to my conscience, and reconciliation to my God, and salvation to my soul; for, hearing is but the conception, meditation is but the quickening, purposing is but the birth, but practising is the growth of this blessed child.

The Gospel then, that which is the Gospel to thee, that is, the assurance of the peace of conscience, is grounded *in sermone*, upon the word; not upon imaginations of thine own, not upon fancies

of others, nor pretended inspirations, nor obtruded miracles, but upon the word; and not upon a suspicious and questionable, not upon an uncertain or variable word, but upon this, that is *fidelis sermo, this is a faithful saying.* It is true, that this apostle seems to use this phrase of speech, as an earnest asseveration, and a band for divers truths in other places: he says sometimes, *This is a true saying*, and *this is a faithful saying*, when he does not mean, that it is the word of God, but only intends to induce a moral certitude, when he would have good credit to be given to that which follows, he uses to say so, *Fidelis sermo*, It is a true, it is a faithful saying: but in all those other places where he uses this phrase, he speaks only of some particular duties, or of some particular point of religion; but here he speaks of the whole body of divinity, of the whole Gospel, that Christ is come to save sinners, and therefore more may be intended by this phrase here, than in other places: when he speaks of that particular point, the resurrection, he uses this phrase, *It is a true saying; if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him*[3]: when he would invite men to godliness, even by the rewards which accompany it in this life, he uses this addition, this confirmation, *For this is a true saying, and worthy to be receiced*[4]; when he gives a dignity to the function and office of the ministry, he proposes it so, *It is a true saying, if any man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work*[5]: it is a work, not an occasion and opportunity of ease. And lastly, when he provokes men to glorify God, by good works, he labours to be believed, by the same phrase still, This is a true saying, and these things I would thou shouldest affirm, *That they which have believed in God, might be careful to show forth good works*[6]. Till he have found faith, and belief in God, he never calls upon good works, he never calls them good; but when we have faith, he would not have us stop nor determine there, but proceed to works too. It is a phrase which the apostle does frequently, and almost proverbially use in these many places, but in all these places, upon particular and lesser occasions; but here, preparing the doctrine of the whole Gospel, this phrase admits a larger extent, That as it is grounded upon the word,

[3] 2 Tim. ii. 11.
[4] 1 Tim. iv. 9.
[5] 1 Tim. iii. 5.
[6] Titus iii. 8.

that is, we must have something to show for it; so it is upon a faithful word, upon that which is clearly, and without the encumbrance of disputation, the infallible word of God; no traditional word, no apocryphal word, but the clear and faithful word. Now of all the attributes, of all the qualities that can be ascribed to the word of God, this is most proper to itself, and most available, and most comfortable to us, that it is *fidelis*, a faithful word; for, this being a word that hath principally respect and relation to the fidelity of God, it implies necessarily a covenant, a contract with us, which God hath bound himself faithfully to perform unto us; and therefore God calls his covenant with David by this name, *Fideles miserecordias David*, *An everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David*[7]. And when the prophet Jeremy apprehended a fear that God would break that covenant which he had made with that nation, which had broken with him, he expresses that passion in a word, contrary to this, and imputes out of his hasty fear, even infidelity to God, *Why art thou unto me* (says he there[8]) *as a liar, et sicut aquæ infideles*, as unfaithful water, that I cannot trust to; or *aquæ mendaces*, as it is in the original, lying waters, deceitful waters, that promise a continuance and do not perform it? Why dost thou pretend to make a covenant with thy people and wilt not perform it faithfully? Most of God's other attributes are accompanied with this in the Scriptures, whatsoever God is called besides, he is called *fidelis*, faithful too. In one place he is *fortis et fidelis*[9], he is powerful; but if he turn his power vindictively upon me, I were better if he were less powerful; but he hath made a covenant with me, that he will turn his power upon those whom he hath called his enemies, because they are mine, and therein lies my comfort, that he is a powerful and a faithful God. In another place, he is *fidelis et sanctus*[10]; he is a holy God; but if he be so, and but so, How shall I, who am unholy, stand in his sight? He hath made a covenant with me, that as they who looked upon the serpent in the wilderness, shed and cast out the venom of that serpent who had stung them before; so when I looked faithfully upon my Saviour, all my unholiness falls off as rags, and I shall

[7] Isaiah LV. 3.
[8] Jer. XV. 18.
[9] Deut. vii. 9.
[10] Isaiah XLIX. 7.

be invested in his righteousness, in his holiness; and so in that lies my comfort, that he is a holy and a faithful God. Howsoever we consider God in the schools, in his other attributes, yet here is my university and my chair, here I must take my degree, in my heart, in my conscience; and this is that that brings God home, and applies him close to me, that he is *fidelis*, a faithful God; that in his mercy he hath made a covenant with us, and in his faithfulness he will perform it. And therefore consider God in his first great work, his creation, so he is *fidelis Creator*[11], let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. He had gracious purposes upon us in our creation, and he is faithful to his purposes; and so this faithful God is God the Father. Consider God in his next great work, the redemption, and so he is *fidelis pontifex*, a faithful high-priest[12], in things concerning God, that he might make reconciliation for the sins of the people; and so this faithful God is God the Son. Consider God in his continuance and dwelling in the church, *usque ad consummationem*, till the end of the world, so he is *fidelis testis*[13], he shall be evermore presenting to God, and testifying in our behalf, the covenant which he hath sealed to the church in his blood, and testifying to our spirit, that that seal belongs unto us; and so this faithful God is God the Holy Ghost; so that when we consider our creation, we are not to consider a creation to condemnation; God forbid: when we consider a redemption, we are not to consider it exclusively, as not intended to us; God forbid: and when we consider God's presence and government in the church, we are not to consider it in a church whose doors are shut up against any of us, so as that we can have no repentance, no absolution; God forbid, we are not to consider God in those decrees, wherein we cannot consider him as *fidelem Deum;* in those decrees, which are not revealed to us, we know not whether he be faithful, or no; for we know not what his promise, what his purpose was: but as he hath manifested himself in his word, as he hath made a conditional contract with us, so as that if we perform our part, he will perform his, and not otherwise; so we may be sure that

[11] 1 Pet. iv. 19. [12] Heb. ii. 17. [13] Rev. i. 5.

he is *fidelis Deus*, a God that will stand to his word, a God that will perform his promises faithfully; for, though it were merely his mercy, that made those promises, yet it is his fidelity, his truth, his faithfulness, that binds him to the performance of them. *The faithful word of God hath said it*, in the Old Testament, and in the New too; *Let God be true, and every man a liar*[14]. The word of the man of sin, the God of Rome, is a lie; Pope Stephen abrogates all the decrees of Pope Formosus, and so gives that lie to him: next year Pope Romanus abrogates all his, and so gives that lie to him; and within seven years, Servius all his; and where was *fidelis sermo*, the faithful word all this while? When they send forth bulls and dispensations to take effect occasionally, and upon emergencies, that *rebus sic stantibus*, if you find matter in this state, this shall be catholic divinity; if not, then it shall be heresy; where is this *fidelis sermo*, this faithful word amongst them? If for the space of a fifteen hundred years, the twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed might have saved any man, but since as many more, Trent articles must be as necessary; still where is that *fidelis sermo*, that faithful word which we may rely upon? God hath not bound himself, and therefore neither hath he bound us to any word but his own; in that only, and in all that we shall be sure to find him, *fidelem Deum*, a faithful God.

Now the truth and faithfulness of the word, consists not only in this, *quod verax*, that it is true in itself, but in this also, *quod testificatus*, that it is established by good testimony to be so. It is therefore faithful because it is the word of God, and therefore also because it may be proved to be the word of God by human testimonies; which is that which is especially intended in this clause, *Omni acceptatione dignus*, It is worthy of all acceptation; worthy to be received by our faith, and by our reason too: our reason tells us, that God's will is revealed to man somewhere, else man could not know how God would be worshipped; and our reason tells us, that this is that word in which that will is revealed. And therefore the greatest part of the Latin fathers, particularly Ambrose and Augustine, read these words otherwise; not *fideliter*, no, but *humanus sermo;* and so many Greek copies

[14] Psalm xxxi. 4; Rom. iii. 9.

have it too, that it is a speech which man, not as he is a faithful man, but even as he is a reasonable man may comprehend, not as St. Hierome will needs understand those words: *Si humanus et non divinus, non esset omni acceptatione dignus;* for that is undeniably true, if it came merely from man, and not from God, it were not worthy to be received by faith; but as St. Augustine expresses that which himself and St. Ambrose meant, *Sic humanus et divinus, quomodo Christus Deus et homo,* As Christ is God too, so as that he is man too; so the Scriptures are from God so, as that they are from man too: the Gospel is a faithful word essentially, as it is the word of God, derived from him, and it is a faithful word too, declaratively, as it is presented by such light and evidence of reason, and such testimonies of the church, as even the reason of man cannot refuse it: so that the reason of man accepts the Gospel, first out of a general notion, that the will of God must be revealed somewhere, and then he receives this for that Gospel, rather than the Alcoran of the Turks, rather than the Talmud of the Jews, out of those infinite and clear arguments which even his reason presents to him for that. And then, as when he compares Scripture with the book of creatures and nature, he finds that evidence more forcible than the other; and when he finds this Scripture compared with other pretended scriptures, Alcoran or Talmud, he finds it to be of infinite power above them; so when he comes to the true Scriptures, and compares the New Testament with the Old, the Gospel with the law, he finds this to be a performance of those promises, a fulfilling of those prophecies, a revelation of those types and figures, and an accomplishment, and a possession of those hopes and those reversions; and when he comes to that argument which works most forcibly, and most worthily upon man's reason, which is *Antiquistrum,* That is best in matter of religion that was first, there he sees that the Gospel was before the law: This I say, says the apostle[15], that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul the covenant, which was confirmed of God in respect of Christ; so shall always in respect of faith and in respect of reason, *It is worthy of acceptation;* for, would thy soul expatiate in that large contemplation of God in general? It is

[15] Gal. iii. 17.

Evangelium Dei, the Gospel of God[16]: Wouldst thou contract this God into a narrower and more discernible station? It is *Evangelium Jesu Christi*, the Gospel of Jesus Christ[17]: Wouldst thou draw it nearer to the consideration of the effects? It is *Evangelium pacis*, the Gospel of peace[18]: Wouldst thou consider it here? Here it is *Evangelium regni*, the Gospel of the kingdom[19]: Wouldst thou consider it hereafter? It is *Evangelium æternum*, the eternal Gospel[20]: Wouldst thou see thy way by it? It is *Evangelium gratiæ*, the Gospel of grace[21]: Wouldst thou see the end of it? It is *Evangelium gloriæ*, the Gospel of glory[22]: *It is worthy of all acceptation* from thee, for the angels of heaven can preach no other Gospel, without being accursed themselves[23].

But the best and fullest acceptation is that which we called at first an approbation, to prove that thou hast accepted it by thy life and conversation: that as thy faith makes no staggering at it, nor thy reason no argument against it, so thy actions may be arguments for it to others, to convince them that do not, and confirm them that do believe in it; for this word, which signifies in our ordinary use, the Gospel, *Evangelium*, was *verbum civile*, *verbum forense*, a word of civil and secular use, before it was made ecclesiastical; and as it had before in civil use, so it retains still, three significations: first it signified *bonum nuntium*, a good and a gracious message: and so, in spiritual use, it is the message of God, who sent his Son; and it is the message of the Son, who sent the Holy Ghost. Secondly it signified *donum offerenti datum*, the reward that was given to him that brought the good news: and so in our spiritual use, it is that spiritual tenderness, that religious good nature of the soul, (as we may have leave to call it) that appliableness, that ductileness, that holy credulity which you bring to the hearing of the word, and that respect which you give to Christ, in his ministers, who brings this Gospel unto you. And then thirdly, it signifies *sacrificium datori immolatum*, the sacrifice which was offered to that God who sent his good message; which in our spiritual use, is that which the apostle exhorts the Romans to with the most earnest-

[16] Rom. i. 1. [17] Mark i. 1. [18] Eph. vi. 15.
[19] Mark i. 14. [20] Rev. xiv. 6.
[21] Acts xx. 24. [22] 1 Tim. i. 11. [23] Gal. i. 8.

ness, (and so do I you) *I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God, that ye give up your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, which is your reasonable serving of God:* now a reasonable service is that which in reason we are bound to do, and which in reason we think would most glorify him, in contemplation of whom that service is done; and that is done especially, when by a holy and exemplar life, we draw others to the love and obedience of the same Gospel which we profess: for then have we declared this true and faithful saying, this Gospel to have been worthy of all acceptation, when we have looked upon it by our reason, embraced it by our faith, and declared it by our good works; and all these considerations arose out of that which at the beginning we called *radicem*, the root of this Gospel, the word, the Scripture, the tree itself, the body of the Gospel, that is the coming of Christ, and the reason of his coming, to save sinners; and then the fruit of this Gospel, that humility, by which the apostle confesseth himself to be the greatest sinner, we reserve for another exercise.

SERMON CXLV.

A SECOND SERMON PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, APRIL 19, 1618.

1 TIMOTHY i. 15.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of which I am the chiefest.

WE have considered heretofore that which appertained to the root, and all the circumstances thereof. That which belongs to the tree itself, what this acceptable Gospel is, *That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;* and then, that which appertains to the fruit of this Gospel, the humility of the apostle, in applying it to himself, *Quorum ego, Of which sinners I am the chiefest*, we reserved for this time. In the first of these, that which we call the tree, the body of this Gospel, there are three

branches; first an advent, a coming; and secondly, the person that came; and lastly, the work for which he came. And in the first of these, we shall make these steps; first, that it is a new coming of a person who was not here before, at least, not in that manner as he comes now, *venit*, he came; and secondly, that this coming is in act, not only in decree; so he was come and slain *ib initio*, from all eternity, in God's purpose of our salvation; nor come only in promise, so he came wrapped up in the first promise of a Messiah; in paradise, in that *ipse conteret*, *He shall bruise the serpent's head;* nor come only in the often renewing of that promise to Abraham, *In semine tuo*, *In thy seed shall all nations be blessed*, nor only in the ratification and refreshing of that promise to Judah, *Donec Silo*, *Till Silo come;* and to David, *In solio tuo*, *The sceptre shall not depart;* nor as he came in the prophets, in Isaiah's *virgo concipiet*, That he should come of a virgin, nor in Michah's *Et tu Bethlem*, That he should come out of that town; but this is a historical, not a prophetical, an actual not a promissory coming; it is a coming already executed; *venit*, he came, he is come. And then thirdly, *Venit in mundum*, *He came into the world*, into the whole world, so that by his purpose first extends to all the nations of the world, and then it shall extend to thee in particular, who art a part of this world, he is come into the world, and into thee. From hence, we shall descend to our second branch to the considerations of the person that comes; and he is, first *Christus*, in which one name we find first his capacity to reconcile God and man, because he is a mixed person, uniting both in himself; and we find also his commission to work this reconciliation, because he is *Christus*, an anointed person, appointed by that unction, to that purpose; and thirdly, we find him to be Jesus, that is, actually a Saviour; that as we had first his capacity and his commission in the name of Christ, so we might have the execution of this commission in the name of Jesus. And then lastly, in the last branch of this part, we shall see the work itself, *Venit salvare*, He came to save; it is not *offerre*, to offer it to them whom he did intend it to, but he came really and truly to save; it was not to show a land of promise to Moses, and then say, there it is, but thou shalt never come at it; it was not to show us salvation, and then say there

it is, in baptism it is, in preaching, and in the other sacrament, it is; but soft, there is a decree of predestination against thee, and thou shalt have none of it; but *Venit salvare*, He came to save; and whom? Sinners. Those, who the more they acknowledge themselves to be so, the nearer they are to this salvation.

First then for the advent, this coming of Christ, we have a rule reasonable general in the school, *Missio in divinis est novo modo operatio*, Then is any person of the Trinity said to be sent, or to come, when they work in any place, or in any person in another manner or measure than they did before; yet that rule doth not reach home, to the expressing of all comings of the persons of the Trinity: the second person came more pretentially than so, more than in an extraordinary working and energy, and execution of his power, if it be rightly apprehended by those fathers, who in many of those angels which appeared to the patriarchs, and whose service God used in delivering Israel out of Egypt, and in giving the law in Sinai, to be the Son of God himself to have been present, and many things to have been attributed to the angels in those histories, which were done by the Son of God, not only working, but present in that place, at that time. So also the Holy Ghost came more presentially than so, more than by an extraordinary extension of his power, when he came presentially and personally in the dove, to seal John's baptism upon Christ. But yet, though those presential[1] comings of Christ as an angel in the Old Testament, and this coming of the Holy Ghost in a dove in the New, were more than ordinary comings, and more than extraordinary workings too, yet they were all far short of this coming of the Son of God in this text: for it could never be said properly in any of those cases, that that or that angel, was the Son of God, the second person, or that that dove was the Holy Ghost, or the third person of the Trinity; but in this advent, which we have in hand here, it is truly and properly said, this Man is God, this son of Mary is the Son of God, this carpenter's son, is that very God that made the world. He came so to us, as that he became us, not only by a new and more powerful working in us, but by assuming our nature upon himself.

[1] Folio edition, "pretential."—ED.

It is a perplexed question in the school, (and truly the balance in those of the middle age, very even) whether if Adam had not sinned, the Son of God had come into the world, and taken our nature and our flesh upon him. Out of the infinite testimonies of the abundant love of God to man many concluded, that howsoever, though Adam had not sinned, God would have dignified the nature of man in the highest degree, that that nature was any ways capable of: and since it appears now, (because that hath been done) that the nature of man was capable of such assuming, by the Son of God, they argue, that God would have done this, though Adam had not sinned. He had not come, say they, *ut medicus*, if man had not contracted that infectious sickness by Adam's sin; Christ had not come in the nature of a physician, to recover him; *Non ut Redemptor* say they, if man had not forfeited his interest and state in heaven by Adam's sin; Christ had not come in the nature of a Redeemer, but *ut frater*, *ut Dominus*, *ad nobilitandum genus humanus*, out of a brotherly love, and out of a royal favour, to exalt that nature which he did love, and to impart and convey to us a greater and nobler state, than we had in our creation: in such a respect, and to such a purpose, he should have come. But since they themselves who follow that opinion come to say, that that is the more subtle opinion, and the more agreeable to man's reason, (because man willingly embraces, and pursues anything that conduces to the dignifying of his own nature) but that the other opinion, that Christ had not come, if our sins had not occasioned his coming, is *magis conformis Scripturis et magis honorat Deum*, is more agreeable to the Scriptures, and derives more honour upon God: we cannot err, if we keep with the Scriptures, and in the way that leads to God's glory, and so say with St. Augustine, *Si homo non periisset*, *Filius hominis non venisset*, If man could have been saved otherwise, the Son of God had not come in this manner: or if that may be interpreted of his coming to suffer only, we may enlarge it with Leo, *Creatura non fieret qui Creator mundi*, He who was Creator of the world, had never become a creature in the world, if our sins had not drawn him to it. It is usefully said by Aquinas, *Deus ordinavit futura, ut futura erant:* God hath appointed all future things to be, but to be so as they are, that is, necessary

things necessarily, and contingent things contingently; absolute things absolutely, and conditional things conditionally; he hath decreed my salvation, but that salvation in Christ; he had decreed Christ's coming into this world, but a coming to save sinners. And therefore it is a frivolous interrogatory, a lost question, an impertinent article, to inquire what God would have done if Adam had stood. But Adam is fallen, and we in him; and therefore though we may piously wish with St. Augustine, *Utinam non fuisset miseria ne ista misericordia esset necessaria*, I would man had not been so miserable, as to put God to this way of mercy; yet since our sins had induced this misery upon us, and this necessity (if we may so say) upon God, let us change all our disputation into thanksgiving, and all our *utrums*, and *quares*, and *quandos* of the school, to the Benedictus, and Hallelujahs and Hosannahs of the church; blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed his people: blessed that he would come at all, which was our first, and blessed that he is come already, which is our second consideration; *venit*, he came, he is come.

As in the former branch, the Gentiles the heathens are our adversaries, they deny the *venit*, that a Messiah is to come at all; so in this, the Jews are our enemies, they confess the *veniet*, a future coming, but they deny the *venit* that this Messiah is come yet. In that language in which God spoke to man there is such an assurance intimated, that whatsoever God promises shall be performed; that in that language ordinarily in the prophets, the times are confounded, and when God is intended to purpose or to promise anything in the future, it is very often expressed in the time past; that which God means to do, he is said to have done; future, and present, and past is all one with God: but yet to man it is much more, that Christ is come, than that he would come; not but that they who apprehended faithfully his future coming, had the same salvation as we, but they could not so easily apprehend it as we: God did not present so many handles to take hold of him in that promise, that he would come, as in the performance, that he was come. They had most of these handles that lived with him, and saw him, and heard him; but we that come after, have more than they which were before them, we have more in the history than they had in the prophets.

It was time for him to come in the beginning of the world, for the devil was a murderer from the beginning[2]. As the devil was *felo de se*, a murderer of himself; as he killed himself, Christ gave him over; he never came to him in that line, he never pardoned him that sin: but as he practised upon man, Christ met with him from the beginning: he saved us from his killing, by dying himself for us; for being dead, and having taken us into his wounds, and being risen, and having taken us into his glory; if we be dead in Christ already, the devil cannot kill us; if we be risen in Christ, the devil cannot hold us: and so he was *Agnus occisus ab origine mundi*, the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, that is, as soon as the world had any beginning in the purpose of God. God saw from all eternity that man would need Christ, and as soon as there was conceived an *Ego occido*, I will kill, in the devil's mouth, then was an *Ego vivificabo*, I will raise from death in God's mouth; and so there was an early coming from all eternity; for he is the ruler of Israel, says the prophet, and his goings forth have been from the beginning, and from everlasting[3]: it is goings in the plural; Christ hath divers goings forth, divers comings, and all from the beginning; not only from Moses' *In principio*, which was the beginning of the Creation, (for then also Christ came in the promise of a Messiah) but from St. John's *In principio*, that beginning which was without beginning, the eternal beginning, for there Christ came in that eternal decree, that he should come. Neither is this only as he is *Germen Jehovæ*[4], the bud of Jehovah, issuing from him as his eternal Son, but as the prophet Michæas says in that place, cited before, it is, as he shall come out of Bethlem, and as he shall be a ruler of Israel: so as he came in our human nature, as he came to die for us, as he came to establish a church, so his coming is from all eternity for all this was wrapped up in a decree of his coming: and therefore we are not carried upon the consideration of any decree, or if any means of salvation higher or precedent to the coming of Christ, for that were to antedate eternity itself.

So then this coming in the text, is the execution of that coming

[2] John viii. 44. [3] Mich. v. 2. [4] Isaiah iv. 2.

in the decree, which is involved in St. John's *In principio*, and it is the performance of it coming, which was enwrapped in the promise, in Moses' *In principio*, it is his actual coming in our flesh; that coming of which Christ said in St. Luke[5], many prophets and kings; and in St. Matthew[6], many prophets and righteous men, desired to see these things which you see, and have not seen them: the prophets who in their very name were *videntes*, seeing, saw not this coming thus; *Your father Abraham, rejoiced to see my day*, saith Christ[7], *and he saw it, and was glad.* All times and all generations before time was were Christ's day; but yet he calls this coming in the flesh especially his day, because this day was a holy equinoctial, and made the day of the Jews and the day of the Gentiles equal; and *Testamenta copulat*, says St. Chrysostom, it binds up the two Testaments into one Bible; for if the patriarchs had not desired to see this day, and had not seen it in the strength of faith, they and we had not been of one communion. We have a most sure word of the prophet, says the apostle[8], and to do that we do well that we take heed; but how far? *As unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.* But now since this coming, *This light hath appeared, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show it unto you*[9]. Simon had an assurance in the prophets, and more immediately than so in the vision; but herein was his assurance and his peace established, *Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation*[10]. The kingdom of heaven was but a reversion to them, and it is no more to us; but to them it was a reversion, as after a grandfather, and father; two lives, two comings of Christ before they would come to their state; Christ must come first in the flesh, and he must come again to judgment. To us, and in our case one of these lives is spent; Christ is come in the flesh: and therefore as the earth is warmer an hour after the sun sets, than it was an hour before the sun rose, so let our faith and zeal be warmer now after Christ departing out of this world, than theirs was before his coming into it: and let us so rejoice at this *ecce venit Rex tuus*, that our King, our Messias, is already come, as that we may

[5] Luke x. 24. [6] Matt. xiii. 17. [7] John viii. 56.
[8] 2 Pet. i. 19. [9] 1 John i. 2. [10] Luke ii. 19.

cheerfully say, *Veni Domini Jesu*, Come Lord Jesu come quickly; and be glad if at the going out of these doors, we might meet him coming in the clouds.

Thus far then he hath proceeded already, *venit* he came, and *venit in mundum*, he came into the world; it is not *inm undam*, into so clean a woman as had no sin at all, none contracted from her parents, no original sin; for so Christ had placed his favours and his honours ill, if he had favoured her most who had no need of him: to die for all the world, and not for his mother, or to die for her, when she needed not that hell, is a strange imagination: she was not without sin; for then why should she have died? for even a natural death in all that come by natural generation, is of sin: but certainly as she was a vessel reserved to receive Christ Jesus, so she was preserved according to the best capacity of that nature, from great and infectious sins. Mary Magdalene was a holy vessel after Christ had thrown the devil out of her; the Virgin Mary was much more so, into whom no reigning power of the devil ever entered; in such an acceptation then Christ came *per mundam in mundum*, by a clean woman into an unclean world. And he came in a purpose, (as we do piously believe) to manifest himself in the Christian religion to all the nations of the world; and therefore, *Lætentur insulæ*, says David, *The Lord reigneth, let the island rejoice*, the island who by reason of their situation, provision and trading, have most means of conveying Christ Jesus over the world. He hath carried us up to heaven, and set us at the right hand of God, and shall not we endeavour to carry him to those nations, who have not yet heard of his name? Shall we still brag that we have brought our clothes, and our hatchets, and our knives, and bread, to this and this value and estimation amongst those poor ignorant souls, and shall we never glory that we have brought the name, and religion of Jesus Christ in estimation amongst them? Shall we stay till other nations have planted a false Christ among them? and then either continue in our sloth, or take more pains in rooting out a false Christ than would have planted the true? Christ is come into the world; we will do little, if we will not ferry him over, and propagate his name, as well as our own, to other nations.

At least be sure that he is so far come into the world, as that he

be come into thee. Thou art but a little world, a world but of a few spans in length; and yet Christ was sooner carried from east to west, from Jerusalem to these parts, than thou canst carry him over the faculties of thy soul and body; he hath been in a pilgrimage towards thee long, coming towards thee, perchance fifty, perchance sixty years; and how far is he got into thee yet? Is he yet come to thine eye? Have they made Job's covenant, that they will not look upon a maid; yet he is not come into thine ear? still thou hast an itching ear, delighting in the libellous defamation of other men. Is he come to thine ear? Art thou rectified in that sense? yet voluptuousness in thy taste, or inordinateness in thy other senses keep him out in those. He is come into thy mouth, to thy tongue; but he is come thither as a diseased person, is taken into a spital to have his blood drawn, to have his flesh cauterized, to have his bones sawed; Christ Jesus is in thy mouth, but in such execrations, in such blasphemies, as would be earthquakes to us if we were earth; but we are all stones, and rocks, obdurate in a senselessness of those wounds which are inflicted upon our God. He may be come to the skirts, to the borders, to an outward show in thine actions, and yet not be come into the land, into thy heart. He entered into thee, at baptism; he hath crept further and further into thee, in catechisms and other infusions of his doctrine into thee; he hath pierced into thee deeper by the powerful threatenings of his judgments, in the mouths of his messengers; he hath made some survey over thee, in bringing thee to call thyself to an account of some of sinful actions; and yet Christ is not come into thee; either thou makest some new discoveries, and fallest into some new ways of sin; and art loth that Christ should come thither yet, that he should trouble thy conscience in that sin, till thou hadst made some convenient profit of it; thou hast studied and must gain, thou has bought and must sell, and therefore art loth to be troubled yet; or else thou hast some land in thee, which thou thyself hast never discovered, some ways of sin which thou hast never apprehended, nor considered to be sin; and thither Christ is not come yet: he is not come into thee with that comfort which belongs to his coming in this text, except he had overshadowed thee all, and be in thee entirely.

We have done with his coming; we come next to the person; in which we consider first, that he was capable of this great employment to reconcile God to man, as he was a mixed person of God and man; and then, that he had a commission for this service, as he was *Christus*, anointed, sealed to that office; and then, that he did actually execute this commission, as he was Jesus. Now when we consider his capacity and fituess, to save the world, this capacity and fitness must have relation to that way, which God had chosen; which was by justice. For God could have saved the world by his word, as well as he had made it so. A *detur venia* now had been as easy to him, as a *fiat lux* at the beginning; a general pardon and a light of grace, as easy as the spreading of the light of nature. But God having purposed to himself the way of justice, then could none be capable of that employment but a mixed person; for God could not die, nor man could not satisfy by death; and both these were required in the way of justice, a satisfaction, and that by death. Now as this unexpressible mixture and union of God and man made him capable of this employment, so he had a particular commission for it, employed in the same name too; for every capable person is not always employed; and this was his unction as he is *Christus*, anointed, severed, sealed for that purpose, for that office. Now whether this unction, that is, this power, to satisfy God's justice for all the sins of all mankind, were *ex ratione sua formali intrinseca*, that is, whether the merit of Christ were therefore infinite in itself, because an infinite Godhead resided in his person, or whether this power and ability by one act, to satisfy for all sins arose *ex pacto et acceptatione*, by the contract they had past between the Father and him, that it was so because it was covenanted between them that it should be so; this hath divided the school into that great opposition which is well known by the name of Thomists and Scotists. The safest way is to place it in *pacto*, in the contract, in the covenant; so if we place it absolutely in the person, and cause the infiniteness of the merit from that, then any act of that person, the very incarnation itself had been enough to save us; but his unction, his commission was to proceed thus and thus, and no otherwise than he did in the work of our redemption. His unction was his qualification; he was

anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows[11], else the season of his enduring the cross, could not have been joy: he was anointed liberally by that woman, when he himself was sold for thirty pieces of silver[12], beyond the value of three hundred pieces in ointment upon him: he was honourably embalmed by Joseph, and Nicodemus, who brought an hundred pound weight of myrrh and aloes to bury him: every way anointed more than others, by others. All his garment smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, as it is in the Canticles; even in the garments of religion, the ceremonies of the church, there is a sweet savour of life: *Oleum effusum nomen ejus*, even in the outward profession of the name of Christ there is a savour of life, an assistance to salvation; for even in taking upon us this name Christ, we acknowledge, both that he was able to reconcile, and sent purposely to reconcile God and man.

But then, the strength of our consolation lies in the other name; as he was Jesus, actually he executed that commission, to which, as he was Christ he was fitted and anointed. Now this is a name, which though the Greeks have translated it into *soter*, yet the great master of Latin language, Cicero, professes that there is no word, which expresses it*; and that great minter of Latin words Tertullian doth so often call by the name of *salutificator*: for Jesus is so; not only a bringer, an applier, a worker of our salvation, but he is the author of the very decree of our salvation, as well as of the execution of that decree: there was no salvation before him, yet there was no salvation intended in the book of life, but in him; yea, no grammarian can clear it, whether this name Jesus signify *salvatorem* or *salutem*, the instrument that saves us, or the salvation that is afforded us; for it is not only his person, but it is his very righteousness that saves us. It was therefore upon that ground that this name was given him, *Thou shalt call his name Jesus*[13], says the angel at his conception: Why? *For he shall save his people from their sins*: not only that he shall be able to do it, nor only that he shall be sent to do it: so far he is but *Christus*, a mixt person, and an anointed person; but he shall actually do it, and so he is Jesus. Names

[11] Psalm xlv. 7. [12] Mark xiv. 3. [13] Matt. i. 21.

* In Verrem, Art. ii. lib. ii. c. 63.

of children are not always answered in their manners, and in the effects: *Non omnes Joannes qui vocantur Joannes*, says St. Chrysostom, every nominal John is not a real John: Absolon's name was *Patris pax*, his father's peace, but he was his father's affliction; but the name of Jesus had the effect, he was called a Saviour, and he was one.

It may seem strange that when St. Matthew says[14], that Mary was to bring forth a child and call his name Jesus, he says also that this was done that the prophecy of Esay might be fulfilled, who said, That a virgin shall bring forth a child, and who shall be called Emanuel; to fulfil a prophecy, of being called Emanuel, he must be called Jesus. Indeed, to be Jesus is a fulfilling of his being Emanuel: Emanuel is God with us, a mixed person, God and man; but Jesus is a Saviour, the performer of that salvation, which only he who was God and man could accomplish. He was Emanuel, as soon as he was conceived, but not Jesus till he began to submit himself to the law for us; which was first in his circumcision, when he took the name of Jesus, and began to shed some drops of blood for us. The name of Jesus was no new name when he took it; we find some of that name in the Scriptures, and in Josephus, we find one officer, that was his enemy, and another a great robber, who lighted upon Josephus more than once, of that name, and yet the prophet Esay says of Christ[15], (and St. Cyril interprets those words of this particular man Jesus) *Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name:* and how was this a new name, by which so many had been called before? The newness was not in that, that none other had had that name, but that the Son of God, had not that name, till he began to execute the office of a Saviour. He was called *Germen Jehovæ*, the bud of Jehovah, before[16]; and he was called the Counsellor, and the Wonderful, and the Prince of Peace, by the same prophet. But it is the observation of Origen, and of Lactantius after, (and it appears in the text itself) that Moses never calls Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua, (which is the very name of Jesus) till he was made general[17], to deliver and save his people, so what names soever were attributed to the

[14] Matt. i. 21. [15] Isaiah LXII. 2.
[16] Isaiah iv. 2. [17] Numb. xiii. 17.

Son of God before, the name of Jesus was a new name, to him then, when he began the work of salvation in his circumcision. Take hold therefore of his name Emanuel, as God is with us, as there is a person fit to reconcile God and man; and take hold of him as he is *Christus*, a person sealed and anointed for that reconciliation: but above all, be sure of thy hold upon the name Jesus thy Saviour. This was his name, when he was carried to the altar to circumcision, and this was his name when he carried his altar the cross; this was his style there, *Jesus Nazarenus*, Jesus of Nazareth: and in the virtue of that name, he shall give thee a circumcised heart, and circumcised lips in the course of thy life; and in the virtue of that name he shall give thee a joyful *consummatum est*, when thou comest to finish all upon thy last altar, thy death-bed.

Now from this consideration of the person, so far as arose out of his several names, we pass to his action, he was able to redeem man, he was sent to redeem man, he did redeem man; How? *Servavit*, He came to save. And here also is that word, which as we said before, is above expressing; for the word which we content ourselves with, to save, implies but a preserving from falling into ruin; but we were absolutely fallen before. The word signifies, *Salutem dare, medici*, and it signifies, *Salutem esse;* and Christ is truly both, both the physician and the physic. But how is it ministered? we see his method is in St. Matthew, *Veni vocare*, I came to call [18]: his way is a voice now, *Vocat, non cogit;* God doth but call us he does not constrain us, he does not drive us into a pound; he calls us as birds do their young, and he would gather us as a hen doth her chickens. It is true there is a *trahit*, but there is no *cogit; No man comes to me*, says Christ, *except the Father draw him* [19], but, *Non inviti trahimur, non inviti credimus*, says St. Augustine, God draws no man against his will, no man believes in God against his will, *Non adhibetur violentia sed voluntas excitatur*, says the same father, God only excites and exalts our will, but he does not force it: he makes use of that of the poet, *Trahit sua quemque voluptas*, Our carnal desires draw us, but this drawing is not a constraining; for then we should not be commanded to resist them, nor to

[18] Matt. ix. 13. [19] John vi. 44.

fight against them, for no man will bid me do so against a cannon bullet that comes with an inevitable, and irresistible violence now, *Habet sensus suas voluptates, et animus deseritur a suis*[20]? Shall our carnal affections draw us, though they do not force us, and shall not grace do the same office too? Shall we still trust to such a power, or such a measure of that grace, at last, as that we shall not be able to resist, but shall convert us whether we will or no, and never concur willingly with God's present grace? *Draw me, and I will run after thee*, says the spouse[21]: she was called before, now she awakens; and she does not say, draw me, and so I shall be screwed up unto thee, and lay all upon the force of grace, but draw me and I will run; she promises an application and concurrence on her part. So then *venit salvare*, is *venit vocare*, he came to save by calling us, as an eloquent and a persuasive man draws his auditory, but yet imprints no necessity upon the faculty of the will; so works God's calling of us in his word. God expresses it fully in the prophet, *I sought Ephraim to go*[22]; we are not able to go, to rise, to move without him; but how did he teach him? I took them by their arms; God made use of their faculties, which faculties are the limbs of the soul: so he enlightened their understanding, and he rectified their will; but still their understanding, and their will. I drew them says God there; but how, and with what? *With cords of man*, says he, and with bands of love; *With the cords of man*, the voice of the minister, and the power which God's ordinance hath infused into that, and with the band of love, that is, of the Gospel so proposed unto us: and as it is added there, *I took off the yoke from their jaws, and I laid meat before them:* God takes off our yoke, the weight of our sins, and the indisposition of our natural infirmities, and he lays meat before us, the Word and the sacraments in his church. So that his *venit salvare*, is *venit solvere; solvere*, that is, to pay our debt, in his death, and *solvere*, that is, to untie our bands, and by his grace to make our natural faculties, formerly bound up in a corrupt inability, to do so, now able to concur with him, and co-operate to good actions. He prepared and he prescribed this physic for man, when he was

[20] Augustine. [21] Cant. i. 4. [22] Hosea xi. 3.

upon earth; *Etiam cum occideretur medicus erat*[23], then when he died, he became our physician; *Medici sanguinem fundunt, ille de ipso sanguine medicamenta facit:* other physicians draw our blood, he makes physic of blood, and of his own blood. So he came to save, in preparing and prescribing, and he came to save in applying, when by the preaching of his word, Joseph who is in the well, and Jeremy who is in the dungeon, do as much as they can, for the tying and fitting of that rope which is offered and let down to them, to draw them. God saves us by a calling, and he saves us by drawing; but he calls them that hearken to him, and he draws them that follow upon his drawing; he saves us who acknowledge that we could not be saved without him, and desire, and that with a faithful assurance to be saved by him; which is that which is intended in the next word, *peccatores*, he came to save sinners.

He came not to call the righteous, but sinners: Is that intended of all effectually? All have sinned, and all are deprived of the glory of God[24]; but sinners here are those sinners, who acknowledge themselves to be sinners; for says he, I came to call them to repentance: and that is the meaning of that exclusion of the righteous; he came *not to call the righteous;* not to call them who call themselves righteous, and thought themselves so, but sinners; not all whom he knew to be sinners, but all who would be brought to know themselves to be so. Them he came to call by the power of miracles when he lived upon earth, and them he stays to call by the power of his Word, now he is ascended into heaven; for as a furnace needs not the same measure and proportion of fire to keep it boiling, as it did to heat it; but yet it doth need the same fire, that is, fire of the same nature, (for the heat of the sun will not keep it boiling, how hot soever,) so the church of God needs not miracles now it is established; but still there is the same fire, the working of the same spirit to save sinners: for that was the end of miracles, and it is the end of preaching, to make men capable of salvation by acknowledging themselves to be sinners. And this hath brought us to the last part of this text, that which at first we called the fruit of the Gospel, humility.

[23] Augustine. [24] Rom. ii. 23.

This brought St. Paul to be of that *Quorum, quorum ego maximus*, not only to discern and confess himself to be a sinner, but the chiefest and greatest sinner of all. *Nihil humilitate sublimius;* it is excellently, but strangely said by St. Hierome; he might rather and more credibly have used any word than that: he might have been easily believed if he had said, *Nihil sapientius*, There is no wiser thing than humility, for he that is low in his own, shall be high in the eyes of others; and to have said, *Nihil perfectius*, There is not so direct a way to perfection as humility: but *Nihil sublimius*, must needs seem strangely said, there is nothing higher than lowness; no such exaltation as dejection; no such revenge as patience; and yet all this is truly and safely said, with that limitation which St. Hierome gives it there, *apud Deum*, in the sight of God, there is no such exaltation as humiliation. We must not coast and cross the nearest way, and so think to meet Christ in his end, which was glory, but we must go after him in all his steps, in the way of humiliation; for Christ's very descent was a degree of exaltation; and by that name he called his crucifying a lifting up, an exaltation. The doctrine of this world goes for the most part otherwise; here we say, lay hold upon something, get up one step; in all want of sufficiency, in all defection of friends, in all changes, yet the place which you hold which raise you to better. In the way to heaven, the lower you go, the nearer the highest and best end you are. *Duo nobis necessaria*, says St. Augustine. *Ut cognoscamus quales ad malum, quales ad bonum:* There are but two things necessary to us to know, how ill we are, and how good we may be; where nature hath left us, and whither grace would carry us. And Abraham, (says that father) expresses this twofold knowledge, when he said to God, *Loquar ad Dominum, qui pulvis sum et cinis*, I know I am but dust and ashes, says Abraham[25], and there is his first knowledge, *Qualis ad malum*, How ill a condition naturally he is in: but then *Loquar ad Dominum*, for all this, though I be but dust and ashes, I have access to my God, and may speak to him; there is his improvement and his dignity. *Vere pulvis omnis homo*, says he; truly every man is truly dust; for as dust is blown from one to

[25] Gen. xviii.

another corner by the wind, and lies dead there till another wind remove it from that corner; so are we hurried from sin to sin, and have no motion in ourselves, but as a new sin imprints it in us: so *vere pulvis*, for our disposition to evil we are truly dust; and *vere cinis*, we are truly dry ashes; for ashes produceth no seed of itself, nor gives growth to any seed that is cast into it; so we have no good in us naturally, neither can we nourish any good that is infused by God into us, except the same grace that sowed it, water it, and weed it, and cherish it, and foment it after. To know that we have no strength of ourselves, and to know that we can lack none if we ask it of God, these are St. Augustine's two arts and sciences, and this is the humility of the Gospel in general.

To come to St. Paul's more particular expressing of his humility here, *Quorum ego primus*, Of which sinners I am the chiefest, as it is true *Veritas non nititur mendacio*, No truth needs the support or assistance of any lie; a man must not belie himself, nor accuse himself against his own conscience, so also, *Humilitas non nititur stupiditati*, An undiscerning stupidity is not humility, for humility itself implies and requires discretion, for humiliation is not precipitation: when the devil enticed the Jesuit at his midnight studies, and the Jesuit rose and offered him his chair, because howsoever he were a devil, yet he was his better, this was no regulated humility: and therefore this which St. Paul says of himself, that he was the greatest sinner, was true in his own heart, and true in a convenient sense, and so neither falsely nor inconsiderately spoken. How then was this true? As there is nothing so fantastical and so absurd, but that some heretics have held it dogmatically; so Aquinas notes here, that there were heretics that held, that the very soul of Adam was by a long circuit and transmigration come at last into Paul, and so Paul was the same man (in his principal part, in the soul) as Adam was; and in that sense it was literally true that he said, he was *primus peccatorum*, the first of all sinners, because he was the first man Adam: but this is an heretical fancy, and a Pythagorean bubble. Great divines have referred this *Quorum ad salvandos*, that Christ came to save sinners; of which sinners that are saved, say they, St. Paul acknowledges himself to be the

greatest; not the greatest sinner in the world, but the greatest of them upon whom the grace of God hath wrought effectually. St. Augustine's interpretation is for one-half thereof, for the negative part' sake; *Primus*, says he, *non tempore;* He says he was the first sinner, but he does not mean the first that sinned, the first in time; but then for the affirmative part, which follows in Augustine, that he was *primus malignitate*, the first, the highest, the greatest sinner, why should we, or how can we charge the apostle so heavily? Beloved to maintain the truth of this which St. Paul says, we need not say that it was materially true, that it was indeed so; it is enough to defend it from falsehood, that it was formally true, that is, that it appeared to him to be true, and not out of a sudden and stupid inconsideration but deliberately: first, he respected his own natural disposition, and proclivity to great sins, and out of that evidence condemned himself: as when a man who professed an art of judging the disposition of a man by his face, had pronounced of Socrates, (whose virtue all the world admired) that he was the most incontinent and licentious man, the greatest thief and extortioner of any man in the world; the people despised and scorned the physiognomer and his art, and were ready to offer violence unto him: Socrates himself corrected their distemper again, and said, It is true that he says, and his judgment is well grounded, for by nature no man is more inclined to these vices than I am. And this disposition to the greatest sins, St. Paul knew in himself. He that hath these natural dispositions is likely to be the greatest sinner, except he have some strong assistance to restrain him: and then, he that hath the offer of such helps, and abuses them, is in a farther step of being the greatest sinner: and this also St. Paul had respect to now, that he had had a good and learned education, a good understanding of the law and the prophets, a good mortification, by being of the strict sect of the pharisees; and yet he had turned all the wrong way, and was therefore in this abuse of these manifold graces the greater sinner. He looked farther than into his own nature, or into his resistance of assistances; he looked into those actions which these had produced in him, and there he saw his breathing of threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, his hunger and thirst of Christian blood: and so

says St. Augustine, *Nemo acrior inter persecutores, ergo nemo prior inter peccatores*, as he found himself the greatest persecutor, so he condemns himself for the greatest sinner. But all these natural dispositions to great sins, negligences, of helps offered, sinful actions produced out of these two, might be greater in many others, than in St. Paul; and it is likely, and it may be certain to us, that they were so; but it was not certain to him, he knew not so much ill by any other man, as by himself. Consider those words in the Proverbs, *Surely I am more foolish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man in me*[26]: for though they be not the words of Solomon, yet they are the words of a prophet, and a prophet who surely was not really more foolish than any man, then in consideration of something which he found in himself, says so: he that considers himself, shall find such degrees of sin, as that he cannot see that any man hath gone lower: or if he have in some particular and notorious sin, yet in *quovis alio, quid occultum esse potest, quo nobis superior sit*[27]: he that is fallen lower than thus in some sin, yet may be above thee in grace; he may have done a greater sin, and yet not be the greater sinner: another hath killed a man, and thou hast not; thou mayest have drawn and drunk the blood of many by usury, by extortion, by oppression. Another in fury of intemperance, hath ravished, and thou hast not; thou mayest have corrupted many by thy deceitful solicitations; and then in thyself art as ill as the ravisher, and thou hast made them worse whom thou hast corrupted. Cast up thine own account, inventory thine own goods; (for sin is the wrath of the sinner, and he treasures up the wrath of God[28]) reckon thine own sins, and thou wilt find thyself rich in that wealth, and find thyself of that *quorum*, that the highest place in that company and mystery of sinners belongs to thee.

St. Paul does so here; yea then, when he saw his own case, and saw it by the light of the Spirit of God; when he took knowledge that Christ was come, and had saved sinners, and had saved him; yet still he says *Sum primus*, still he remains in his accusation of himself that he was still the greatest sinner, because he remained still in his infirmity, and aptness to relapse

[26] Prov. xxx. 2. [27] Augustine. [28] Rom. ii. 5.

into former sins. As long as we are, we are subject to be worse than we are; and those sins which we apprehend even with horror and amazement, when we hear that others have done them, we may come to do them with an earnestness, with a delight, with a defence, with a glory, if God leaves us to ourselves. As long as that is true of us, *Sum primus homo*, I am no better than the first man, than Adam was, (and none of us are in any proportion so good) that is true also, *Quorum primus sum ego*, I am still in a slippery state, and in an evident danger of being the greatest sinner. This is the conclusion for every humble Christian, no man is a greater sinner than I was, and I am not sure but that I may fall to be worse than ever I was, except I husband and employ the talents of God's graces better than I have done.

SERMON CXLVI.

PREACHED AT WHITEHALL, FEBRUARY 29, 1627.

Acts vii. 60.

And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

He that will die with Christ upon Good Friday, must hear his own bell toll all Lent; he that will be partaker of his passion at last, must conform himself to his discipline of prayer and fasting before. Is there any man, that in his chamber hears a bell toll for another man, and does not kneel down to pray for that dying man? and then when his charity breathes out upon another man, does he not also reflect upon himself, and dispose himself as if he were in the state of that dying man? We begin to hear Christ's bell toll now, and is not our bell in the chime? We must be in his grave, before we come to his resurrection, and we must be in his death-bed before we come to his grave: we must do as he did, fast and pray, before we can say as he said, that *In manus tuas*, Into thy hands O Lord I commend my Spirit. You would not

go into a medicinal bath without some preparatives; presume not upon that bath, the blood of Christ Jesus, in the sacrament then, without preparatives neither. Neither say to yourselves, we shall have preparatives enough, warnings enough, many more sermons before it come to that, and so it is too soon yet; you are not sure you shall have more; not sure you shall have all this; not sure you shall be affected with any. If you be, when you are, remember that as in that good custom in these cities, you hear cheerful street-music in the winter mornings, but yet there was a sad and doleful bellman, that waked you, and called upon you two or three hours before that music came; so for all that blessed music which the servants of God shall present to you in this place, it may be of use, that a poor bellman waked you before, and though but by his noise, prepared you for their music. And for this early office I take Christ's earliest witness, his proto-martyr, his first witness St. Stephen, and in him that which especially made him his witness, and our example, is his death, and our preparation to death, what he suffered, what he did, what he said, so far as is knit up in those words, *When he had said this, he fell asleep.*

From which example, I humbly offer to you these two general considerations; first, that every man is bound to do something before he die; and then to that man who hath done those things which the duties of his calling bind him to, death is but a sleep. In the first, we shall stop upon each of those steps; first there is a *sis aliquid*, every man is bound to be something, to take some calling upon him. Secondly there is a *hoc age;* every man is bound to do seriously and sedulously, and sincerely the duties of that calling. And thirdly there is a *sis aliquis;* the better to perform those duties, every man shall do well to propose to himself some person, some pattern, some example whom he will follow and imitate in that calling. In which third branch of this first part, we shall have just occasion to consider some particulars in him who is here proposed for our example, St. Stephen; and in these three, *sis aliquid*, be something, profess something; and then *hoc age*, do truly the duties of that profession; and lastly, *sis aliquis*, propose some good man, in that profession to follow, and in the things intended in this text, propose St. Stephen, we shall

determine our first part. And in the other we shall see that to them that do not this, that do not settle their consciences so, death is a bloody conflict, and no victory at last, a tempestuous sea, and no harbour at last, a slippery height, and no footing, a desperate fall and no bottom. But then to them that have done it, their pill is gilded, and the body of the pill honey too; *mors lucrum*, death is a gain, a treasure, and this treasure brought some in a calm too; they do not only go to heaven by death, but heaven comes to them in death; their very manner of dying is an inchoative act of their glorified state: therefore it is not called a dying but a sleeping; which one metaphor intimates two blessings, that because it is a sleep it gives a present rest, and because it is a sleep, it promises a future waking in the resurrection.

First, then for our first branch of our first part, we begin with our beginning, our birth; *Man is born to trouble;* so we read it, *to trouble.* The original is a little milder than so; yet there it is, *Man is born unto labour*[1], God never meant less than labour to any man. Put us upon that which we esteem the honourablest of labours, the duties of martial discipline, yet where it is said, that man is appointed to a warfare upon earth, it is seconded with that, *His days are like the days of an hireling*[2]. How honourable soever his station be, he must do his day's labour in the day, the duties of the place in the place. How far is he from doing so, that never so much as considers why he was sent into this world; who is so far from having done his errand here, that he knows not, considers not, what his errand was; nay knows not, considers not, whether he had any errand hither or no. But as though that God, who for infinite millions of millions of generations, before any creation, any world, contented himself with himself, satisfied, delighted himself with himself in heaven, without any creatures, yet at last did bestow six days' labour upon the creation and accommodation of man, as though that God who when man was soured in the whole lump, poisoned in the fountain, perished at the core, withered in the root, in the fall of Adam, would then in that dejection, that exinanition, that evacuation of the dignity of man, and not in his former better estate, engage his

[1] Job v. 7. [2] Job vii. 1.

own Son, his only, his beloved Son, to become man by a temporary life, and then to become no man by a violent, and yet a voluntary death; as though that God when he was pleased to come to a creation, might yet have left thee where thou wast before, amongst privations, a nothing; or if he would have made thee something, a creature, yet he might have shut thee up in the close prison of a bare being and no more, without life or sense, as he hath done earth and stones; or if he would have given thee life and sense, he might have left thee a toad, without the comeliness of shape, without that reasonable and immortal soul, which makes thee a man; or if he had made thee a man, yet he might have lost thee upon the common amongst the heathen, and not have taken thee into his inclosures, by giving thee a particular form of religion; or if he would have given thee a religion, he might have left thee a Jew; or if he would have given thee Christianity, he might have left thee a papist, as though this God who had done so much for thee, by breeding thee in a true church, had done all this for nothing; thou passest through this world as a flash, as a lightning of which no man knows the beginning or the ending, as an *ignis fatuus*, in the air, which does not only not give light for any use, but does not so much as portend or signify anything; and thou passest out of the world, as a hand passes out of a bason, or a body out of a bath, where the water may be the fouler for thy having washed in it, else the water retains no impression of thy hand or body, so the world may be the worse for thy having lived in it, else the world retains no marks of thy having been there. When God placed Adam in the world, God enjoined Adam to fill the world, to subdue the world, and to rule the world; when God placed him in paradise, he commanded him to dress paradise, and to keep paradise; when God placed his children in the land of promise, he enjoined them to fight his battles against idolatry, and to destroy idolators; to every body some errand, some task for his glory; and thou comest from him into this world, as though he had said nothing to thee at parting, but go and do as thou shalt see cause, go and do as thou seest other men do, and serve me so far, and save thine own soul so far, as the times, and the places, and the persons, with whom thou dost converse, will conveniently admit.

God's way is positive, and thine is privative: God made every thing something, and thou makest the best of things, man, nothing; and because thou canst not annihilate the world altogether, as though thou hadst God at an advantage, in having made an abridgment of the world in man, there in that abridgment thou wilt undermine him, and make man, man, as far as thou canst, man in thyself nothing. He that qualifies himself for nothing, does so; he whom we can call nothing, is nothing: this whole world is one entire creature, one body; and he that is nothing may be excremental nails, to scratch and gripe others, he may be excremental hairs for ornament, or pleasurableness of meeting; but he is no limb of this entire body, no part of God's universal creature, the world. God's own name is *I am: Being*, is God's name, and nothing is so contrary to God as to be nothing. Be something, or else thou canst do nothing; and till thou have said this, says our text, that is, done something in a lawful calling, thou canst not sleep Stephen's sleep, not die in peace. *Sis aliquid*, propose something, determine thyself upon something, be, profess something, that was our first; and then our second consideration is, *hoc age*, do seriously, do sedulously, do sincerely the duties of that calling.

He that stands in a place and does not the duty of that place, is but a statue in that place; and but a statue without an inscription; posterity shall not know him, nor read who he was. In nature the body frames and forms the place; for the place of the natural body is that *proxima aëris superficies*, that inward superficies of the air, that invests and clothes, and apparels that body, and obeys, and follows, and succeeds to the dimensions thereof. In nature the body makes the place, but in grace the place makes the body: the person must actuate itself, dilate, extend and propagate itself according to the dimensions of the place, by filling it in the execution of the duties of it. Pliny delivers us the history of all the great masters in the art of painting[8]: he tells us who began with the extremities and the outlines at first, who induced colours after that, and who after superinduced shadows; who brought in *argutias vultus*, as he calls them; not only the countenance, but the

[8] l xxxv. c. 3.

meaning of the countenance, and all that so exquisitely, that (as he says there) *Divinantes diem mortis dixerunt*, Physiognomers would tell a man's fortune as well by the picture as by the life; he tells us, *Quis pinxit quæ pingi non possunt*, Who first adventured to express inexpressible things; *Tonitrua, perturbationes, animas;* They would paint thunder which was not to be seen, but heard: and affections, and the mind, the soul which produced those affections. But for the most part he tells us all the way, in what places there remained some of their pieces to be seen, and copied in his time. This is still that that dignifies all their works, that they wrought so, as that posterity was not only delighted, but improved and bettered in that art by their works: for truly that is one great benefit that arises out of our doing the duties of our own places, in our own time, that as a perfume intended only for that room, where the entertainment is to be made, breathes upward and downward, and round about it; so the doing of the duties of the place, by men that move in middle spheres, breathe upwards and downwards, and about too, that is, cast a little shame upon inferiors if they do not so, and a little remembrance upon superiors that they should do so, and a thanksgiving to Almighty God for them that do so: and so it is an improvement of the present, and an instruction and a cathechism to future times. The duty in this text is expressed and limited in speaking. *Cum dixisset, When he had said this he fell asleep*, and truly so, literally so, in speaking, and no more, it stretches far: many duties, in many great places consist in speaking; ours do so: and therefore, when vices abound in matter of manners, and schisms abound in matter of opinions, *antequam dixerimus hoc*, till we have said this, that is, that that belongeth to that duty, we cannot sleep Stephen's sleep, we cannot die in peace. The judge's duty lies much in this too, for he is bound not only to give a hearing to a cause, but to give an end, a judgment in the cause too: and so, for all them whose duty lies in speaking, from him who is to counsel his friend, to him who is to counsel his master in the family (for Job professes that he never refused the counsel of his servant) *Antequam dixerint*, Till they have said this, that is still, that that belongs to that duty, they cannot sleep Stephen's sleep, they

cannot die in peace: and when we ascend to the consideration of higher persons, they and we speak not one language, for our speaking is but speaking but with great persons, *acta apothegmata*, their apothegms are their actions, and we hear their words in their deeds. God, whose image and name they bear does so: if we consider God; as a second person in the Godhead, the Son of God, God of God, so God is *logos*, *sermo*, *verbum*, *oratio;* the word, saying, speaking; but God considered primarily and in himself so, is *actus purus*, all action, all doing. In the creation there is a *dixit* in God's mouth, still God says something; but evermore the *dixit* is accompanied with a *fiat*, something was to be done, as well as said. The apostles are apostles in that capacity as they were sent to preach, that is speaking; but, when we come to see their proceeding, it is in *praxi*, in the Acts of the Apostles. In those persons whose duty lies in speaking, there is an *antequam dixerint;* in those where it lies in action, there is an *antequam fecerint;* till that be said, and done, which belongs to their particular callings, they cannot sleep Stephen's sleep, they cannot die in peace; and therefore, *Non dicas de Deo tuo gravis mihi est*[4], Say not of thy God, that he lies heavy upon thee, if he exact the duties of thy place at thy hands; *Nec dicas de loco tuo, inutilis mihi est*, Say not of thy place, that it is good for nothing, if thou must be put to do the duties of the place, in the place; for it is good for this, that when thou hast done that thou mayest sleep Stephen's sleep, die in peace. *Sis aliquid*, be something that was our first, and then *hoc age*, do truly the duties of that place without pretermitting thine own, without intermeddling with others, which was our second; and then our third consideration is, *sis aliquis*, be somebody, be like somebody, propose some good example in thy calling and profession to imitate.

It was the counsel of that great little philosopher Epictetus, whensoever thou undertakest any action, to consider what a Socrates, or a Plato; what a good and a wise man would do in that case, and to do conformably to that. One great orator, Latinus Rufus, proposed to himself Cicero for his example, and Cicero propounded Demosthenes, and he Pericles, and Pericles Pisistratus; and so there was a concatenation, a genealogy, a

[4] Ambrose's xvii. Ep.

pedigree of a good orator; *Habet unumquodque propositum principes suos*[5]: In every calling, in every profession, a man may find some exemplar, some leading men to follow. The king hath a Josias, and the beggar hath a Job, and every man hath some: but here we must not pursue particulars, but propose to all, him whom our text proposes, St. Stephen; and in him we offer you first his name, Stephen. Stephen, *Stephanos* is a leading, an exemplar name, a significative, a prophetical, a sacramental, a catechistical name; a name that carries much instruction with it. Our countryman Bede takes it to be an Hebrew name, and it signifies (saith he) *Normam vestram*, Your rule, your law: to obey the law, to follow, to embrace the law is an acceptable service to God, especially the invariable law, the law of God himself: but we are sure that this name Stephen, *Stephanos* signifies a crown; to obey the crown, to follow, to serve the crown, is an acceptable service to God, especially the immarcessible crown, the crown of glory. *Nomen omen;* scarce any man hath a name, but that name is legal and historical to him: his very name remembers him of some rules, and laws of his actions; so his name is legal, and his name remembers him of some good men of the same name; and so his name is historical. *Nomina debita:* in the old formularies of the civil law, if a man left so many names to his executors, they were so many specialties for debts. Our names are debts, every man owes the world the signification of his name, and of all his names; every addition of honour, or of office, lays a new debt, a new obligation upon him; and his first name, his Christian name above all. For, when new names are given to men in the Scriptures, that doth not abolish or extinguish the old: Jacob was called Jacob after God had called him Israel; and Gedeon Gedeon after he was called Jerubbaal, and Simon when he was Peter too, was called Simon. Changes of office and additions of honour must not extinguish our Christian-name; the duties of our Christianity, and our religion must preponderate and weigh down the duties of all other places, and for all together. St. Gregory presents us a good use of this diligence to answer our names, *Quo quis timet magis, ne quod dicitur non esset, eo plus quam dicitur erit;* The

[5] Hierome.

more a man is afraid that he is not worthy of the name he bears, whether the name of office or his Christian-name, the better officer and the better Christian he will be for that fear, and that solicitude; and therefore it is an useful and an appliable prayer for great persons, which that father makes in their behalf, *Præsta, quæsumus Domine, ut quod in ore hominum sumus, in conspectu tuo esse valeamus:* Grant, O Lord, that we may always be such in thine eyes, as we are in their tongues that depend upon us, and justify their acclamations with thy approbations. And so far Stephen's name, as his name signifies the law, and as his name signifies the reward of fulfilling the law; a crown hath carried us to the consideration of the duty of answering the signification of our names; but then there are other passages in his history and actions that carry us farther.

First then we receive St. Stephen to have been St. Paul's kinsman in the flesh, and to have been his fellow-pupil under Gamaliel, and to have been equal to him, at least in the foundations, in natural faculties, and in the superedifications too, in learnings of acquisition and study; and then to have had this great advantage above him, that he applied himself as a disciple to Christ before St. Paul did; and in that profession became so eminent (for all the sects, and libertines themselves taking the liberty to dispute against him, they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake[6]) as that his cousin Paul, then but Saul, envied him most, promoved and assisted at his execution: for upon those words but two verses before our text, that *they that stoned Stephen, laid down their clothes at Saul's feet*[7], St. Augustine says, *In manu omnium cum lapidavit*, That it was Saul that stoned Stephen, though by the hands of other executioners. Men of the best extraction and families, men of the best parts and faculties, men of the best education and proficiencies, owe themselves to God by most obligations. Him that dies to-day, God shall not only ask, Where is that soul? Is it as clean as I made it at first? No stain of sin? or is it as clean as I washed it in baptism? No sting? No venom of original sin in it? or is it as clean as I left it when we met last at the sacrament? No guiltiness of actual sin in it? God

[6] Acts vi. 9. [7] Acts vii. 58.

shall not only ask this, Where is that soul? Nor only ask where is that body? Is it come back in that virginal integrity in which I made it? or is it no farther departed from that, than marriage, which I made for it, hath made it? Are those *maritales ineptiæ* (that we may put Luther's words into God's mouth) the worst that is fallen upon that body? God shall not only ask for that soul and that body, but ask also, Where is that wit, that learning, those arts, those languages which by so good education I afforded thee? Truly when a weak and ignorant man departs into any vicious way, though in that case he do adhere to the enemy, and do serve the devil against God, yet he carries away but a single man, and serves but as a common soldier: but he that hath good parts, and good education, carries a regiment in his person, and armies and amunition for a thousand in himself. Though then thy kinsmen in the flesh, and thy fellow-pupils under Gamaliel, men whom thou hast accompanied heretofore in other ways, think thy present fear of God, but a childishness and pusilanimity, and thy present zeal to his service but an infatuation, and a melancholy, and thy present application of thyself to God in prayer, but an argument of thy court-despair, and of thy falling from former hopes there; yet come thou early, if it be early yet; and if it be not early, come apace to Christ Jesus: how learned soever thou art yet to learn thy first letters, if thou know not that Christ Jesus is *Alpha* and *Omega*, he in whom thou must begin and determine every purpose: thou hast studied thyself but into a dark and damnable ignorance, if thou have laboured for much learning only to prove that thou canst not be saved, only to dispute against the person and the Gospel of Christ Jesus. But propose to thine imitation Stephen, who though enriched with great parts, and formerly accustomed to the conversation of others of a different persuasion, applied himself early to Christ as a disciple, and more than in that general application, in a particular function and office as a deacon, as is expressed in the former chapter[s].

The Roman church that delights in irresolutions, and gains, and makes profit in holding things in suspense, holds up this question undetermined, whether that office and function which

[s] Acts vi. 5.

Stephen took of deacon, be so *è sacris*, a part of holy orders, as that it is a sacrament, or any part of the sacrament of orders. Durand, a man great in matter of ceremony, Cajetan, a man great in matter of substance, do both deny it; and divers, many, very many besides them; and they are let alone, and their church says nothing against them, or in determination of the opinion. But yet howsoever the stronger opinion even in that church lead the other way, and the form of giving that office by imposition of hands, and the many and great capacities that they receive, that they receive it, carry it to a great height, yet the use that we make of it here shall be but this, that even Stephen, who might have been *inter doctores*, doctor, (as Chrysologus says of him) a doctor to teach doctors; and *inter apostolos apostolus*, an apostle to lead apostles, contented himself with a lower degree in the service of Christ in his church, the service of a deacon, which very name signifies service, and ministration. It is a diminution of regal dignity, that the Roman church accounts the greatest kings, but as deacons, and assigns them that rank and place in all their ecclesiastical solemnities, in their ceremonials. But Constantine knew his own place without their marshalling: in the midst of bishops, and bishops met in council, he calls himself bishop, and bishop of bishops: and the greatest bishop of this land, in his time[9], professed his master the king, to be *pastor pastorum*, a shepherd of shepherds. It is a name due to the king, for it signifies inspection and superintendency; as the name of priest is also given to secular magistrates that had no part in ecclesiastical function in the Scriptures; particularly, in Potiphar[10], and to divers others in divers other places. But yet though that name of superintendency be due unto him, let him who is crowned in his office as Stephen was in his name, accept this name and office of ministration of deacon, since the Holy Ghost himself hath given him that name, *The minister of God for good*[11], (there is the word of ministration, the name *Diaconus* imprinted upon the king) and since our super-supreme ordinary, our super-sovereign head of the church, Christ Jesus himself calls himself, by that name, *The Son of man not to be ministered unto*,

[9] St. Dunstan. [10] Gen. xli. 45. [11] Rom. xiii. 4.

but to minister[18]; there is this word of ministration, the office, the name of deacon imprinted upon Christ himself. And though in our interest, in him who is also a king and a priest; we are all *regale sacerdotium*[19], kings and priests too, yet let us accept the name, and execute the office of deacon, of ministration, especially upon ourselves: for as every man is a world in himself, so every man is a church in himself too: and in the ancient church, it was a part of the deacon's office, to call out to the church, to the congregation, *Nequis contra aliquem, nequis in hypocrisi;* Let no man come hither to church, (indeed no whether, for every place, because God is present in every place, is a church,) either in uncharitableness towards others, or in hypocrisy and in dissimulation in himself: bring always a charitable opinion towards other men, and sincere affections in thyself, and thou hast done the right office of a deacon, upon the right subject thou hadst ministered to thine own soul. But the height of Stephen's exemplariness, (which is the consideration that we pursue in this branch of this first part) is not so much in his active as in his passive part; not so much in that he did, as in that he suffered; not as he answered and discharged the duties of his name; so we have proposed him to you; nor as he was an early disciple; and came to Christ betimes, we have proposed him so too; nor as he made his ambition only to serve Christ, and not to serve him in a high place, but only as a deacon; for in that line also we have proposed him to you; but as he was a constant and cheerful martyr, and laid down his life for Christ, and in that qualification propose him to yourselves, and follow as a martyr.

Eusebius the bishop of Cæsarea, was so in love with Pamphilus the martyr, as a martyr, that he would needs take his name, before he could get his addition; and though he could not be called martyr then, yet he would be called Pamphilus and not Eusebius. The name of Stephen hath enough in it to serve not only the vehementest affection, but the highest ambition; for there is a coronation in the name as we told you before. And therefore in the ecclesiastical story and martyrologies of the church, there are (I think) more martyrs of this name, Stephen,

[18] Mark x. 45. [19] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

than any other name; indeed they have all that name, for the name is a coronation. And therefore the kingdom of heaven, which is expressed by many precious metaphors in the Gospel, is never called a crown, till after Stephen's death, till our coronation was begun in his martyrdom, but after in the Epistles often, and in the Revelation very often. For to suffer for God, man to suffer for God, I to suffer for my Maker, for my Redeemer, is such a thing, as no such thing, excepting only God's sufferings for man can fall into the consideration of man. God's suffering for man was the nadir the lowest point of God's humilitation, man's suffering for God is the zenith, the highest point of man's exaltation: that as man needed God, and God would suffer for man, so God should need man, and man should suffer for God; that after God's general commission, *Fac hoc et vives*, Do this and thou shalt live, I should receive and execute a new commission, *Patere hoc et vives abundantius*, Suffer this and you shall have life and life more abundantly[14]; as our Saviour speaks in the Gospel, that when I shall ask my soul David's question, *Quid retribuam*[15], What shall I render to the Lord, I shall not rest in David's answer, *Accipiam calicem*, I will take the cup of salvation, in applying his blood to my soul, but proceed to an *effundam calicem*, I will give God a cup, a cup of my blood, that whereas to me the meanest of God's servants it is honour enough to be believed for God's sake: God should be believed for my sake, and his Gospel the better accepted, because the seal of my blood is set to it; that that dew which should water his plants, the plants of his paradise, his church, should drop from my veins, and that sea, that red sea, which should carry up his bark, his ark, to the heavenly Jerusalem, should flow from me; this is that that pours joy even into my gladness, and glory even into mine honour, and peace even into my security; that exalts and improves every good thing, every blessing that was in me before, and makes even my creation glorious, and my redemption precious; and puts a farther value upon things inestimable before, that I shall fulfil the sufferings of Christ in my flesh[16], and that I shall be offered up for his church[17], though not for the pur-

[14] John x. 10. [15] Psalm cxv. 12.
[16] Col. i. 24. [17] Phil. ii. 17.

chasing of it, yet for the fencing of it, though not by way of satisfaction as he was, but by way of example[18] and imitation as he was too. Whether that be absolutely true or no, which an author of much curiosity in the Roman church says, that *Inter tot millia millium*, Amongst so many thousand thousands of martyrs in the Primitive church, it cannot be said that ever one lacked burial, (I know not whence he raises that) certainly no martyr ever lacked a grave in the wounds of his Saviour, no nor a tomb, a monument, a memorial in this life, in that sense wherein our Saviour speaks in the Gospel[19], That no man shall leave house, or brother, or wife for him, but he shall receive an hundredfold in this life; Christ does not mean he shall have a hundred houses, or a hundred wives, or a hundred brethren; but that that comfort which he lost in losing those things shall be multiplied to him in that proportion even in this life. In which words of our Saviour, as we see the dignity and reward of martyrdom, so we see the extent and latitude, and compass of martyrdom too; that not only loss of life, but loss of that which we love in this life; not only the suffering of death, but the suffering of crosses in our life, contracts the name, and entitles us to the reward of martyrdom. All martyrdom is not a Smithfield martyrdom, to burn for religion. To suffer injuries, and upon advantages offered, not to revenge those injuries, is a court martyrdom. To resist outward temptations from power, and inward temptations from affections; in matter of judicature, between party and party, is a Westminster martyrdom. To seem no richer than they are, not to make their states better, when they make their private bargains with one another, and to seem so rich, as they are, and not to make their states worse, when they are called upon to contribute to public services, this is an exchange martyrdom. And there is a chamber martyrdom, a bosom martyrdom too; *Habet pudicitia servata martyrium suum*[20], Chastity is a daily martyrdom; and so all fighting of the Lord's battles, all victory over the Lord's enemies, in our own bowels, all cheerful bearing of God's crosses, and all watchful crossing of our own immoderate desires is a martyrdom accept-

[18] 1 Pet. ii. 17. [19] Mark x. 30. [20] Hierome.

able to God, and a true copy of our pattern Stephen, so it be inanimated with that which was even the life and soul and price of all Stephen's actions and passions, that is, fervent charity, which is the last contemplation; in which we propose him for your example; that as he, you also may be just paymasters in discharging the debt, which you owe the world in the signification of your names; and early disciples and appliers of yourselves to Christ Jesus, and humble servants of his, without inordinate ambition of high places; and constant martyrs, in dying every day, as the apostle speaks[21], and charitable intercessors, and advocates and mediators to God, even for your heaviest enemies.

We have a story in the ecclesiastical story of Nicephorus and Sapricius, formerly great friends, and after as great enemies: Nicephorus relented first, and sued often for reconciliation to Sapricius, but was still refused: he was refused even upon that day, when Sapricius being led out to execution, as a martyr for the Christian religion, Nicephorus upon the way, put himself in his way, and upon his knees begged a reconciliation, and obtained it not. The effect of his uncharitableness was this, Sapricius, when he came to the stake, recanted, and renounced the Christian religion, and lost the crown of martyrdom, and Nicephorus who came forth upon another occasion professed Christ, and was received to the coronation of martyrdom. Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing, says the apostle[22]; but if I have not charity I shall not be admitted to that sacrifice, to give my body to be burnt. St. Augustine seems to have delighted himself with that saying (for he says it more than once) *Si Stephanus non orasset*, If St. Stephen had not prayed for Saul, the church had had no Paul: and may we not justly add to that, If Stephen had not prayed for Saul, heaven had had no Stephen, or Stephen had had no heaven: suffering itself is but a stubbornness, and a rigid and stupid standing under an affliction; it is not a humiliation, a bending under God's hand, if it be not done in charity. Stephen had a pattern, and he is a pattern; Christ was his, and he is our example; *Ut hoc dicam tibi, à te primo audivi*, says St. Augustine

[21] 1 Cor. xv. 31. [22] 1 Cor. xv. 3.

in Stephen's person to Christ, Lord thou taughtest me this prayer upon the cross; receive it now from me, as the Father received it from thee then. He prayed for his enemies as for himself; and thus much more earnestly for them than for himself, that he prayed for himself standing, and kneeling for them. Stephen was the plaintiff, and when he comes to his *nolo prosequi*, and to release, what hath the judge to say to the defendant. If a potent adversary oppress thee to ruin, to death, if thou pass away uncharitably towards him, thou raisest an everlasting trophy for thine enemy, and preparest him a greater triumph than he proposed to himself; he meant to triumph over thy body, and thy fortune, and thou hast provided him a triumph over thy soul too by thy uncharitableness; and he may survive to repent, and to be pardoned at God's hands, and thou who art departed in uncharitableness canst not; he shall be saved that ruined thee unjustly, and thou who wast unjustly ruined by him, shalt perish irrecoverably. And so we have done with all those pieces which constitute our first part, *sis aliquid*, profess something, *hoc age*, do seriously the duties of that profession, and then *sis aliquis*, propose some good man in that profession for thine imitation; as we have proposed Stephen for general duties, falling upon all professions. And we shall pass now to our other part, which we must all play, and play in earnest, that conclusion in which we shall but begin our everlasting state, our death, *When he had said this he fell asleep.*

Here I shall only present to you two pictures, two pictures in little: two pictures of dying men; and every man is like one of these, and may know himself by it; he that dies in the bath of a peaceable, and he that dies upon the wreck of a distracted conscience. When the devil imprints in a man, *emortuum me esse non curo*, I care not though I were dead, it were but a candle blown out, and there were an end of all, where the devil imprints that imagination: God will imprint an *emori nolo*, a lothness to die, and fearful apprehension at his transmigration: as God expresses the bitterness of death, in an ingemination, *morte morietur*, in a conduplication of deaths, he shall die, and die, die twice over; so *ægrotando ægrotabit*, in sickness he shall be sick, twice sick, body-sick and soul-sick too, sense-sick and conscience

sick together; when, as the sins of his body have cast sicknesses and death upon his soul, so the inordinate sadness of his soul, shall aggravate and actuate the sickness of his body. His physician ministers, and wonders it works not; he imputes that to phlegm, and ministers against that, and wonders again that it works not: he goes over all the humours, and all his medicines, and nothing works, for there lies at his patient's heart a damp that hinders the concurrence of all his faculties, to the intention of the physician, or the virtue of the physic. Lose not, O blessed apostle, thy question upon this man. *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory*[28]? For the sting of death is in every limb of his body, and his very body is a victorious grave upon his soul: and as his carcase and his coffin shall lie equally insensible in his grave, so his soul, which is but a carcase, and his body, which is but a coffin of that carcase, shall be equally miserable upon his death-bed: and Satan's commissions upon him shall not be signed by succession, as upon Job, first against his goods, and then his servants, and then his children, and then himself; but not at all upon his life; but he shall apprehend all at once, ruin upon himself and all his, ruin upon himself and all him, even upon his life; both his lives, the life of this, and the life of the next world too. Yet a drop would redeem a shower, and a sigh now a storm then: yet a tear from the eye, would save the bleeding of the heart, and a word from the mouth now, a roaring, or (which may be worse) a silence of consternation, of stupefaction, of obduration at that last hour. Truly, if the death of the wicked ended in death, yet to escape that manner of death were worthy a religious life. To see the house fall, and yet be afraid to go out of it; to leave an injured world, and meet an incensed God; to see oppression and wrong in all thy professions, and to foresee ruin and wastefulness in all thy posterity; and lands gotten by one sin in the father, moulder away by another in the son; to see true figures of horror, and lie, and fancy worse; to begin to see thy sins but then, and find every sin (at first sight) in the proportion of a giant, able to crush thee into despair; to see the blood of Christ, imputed, not to thee, but to thy sins; to see Christ crucified, and not crucified for thee, but

[28] 1 Cor. xv. 55.

crucified by thee; to hear this blood speak, not better things, than the blood of Abel, but louder for vengeance than the blood of Abel did; this is his picture that hath been nothing, that hath done nothing, that hath proposed no Stephen, no law to regulate, no example to certify his conscience: but to him that hath done this, death is but a sleep.

Many have wondered at that note of St. Chrysostom's, That till Christ's time death was called death, plainly, literally death, but after Christ, death was called but sleep; for, indeed, in the Old Testament before Christ, I think there is no one metaphor so often used, as sleep for death, and that the dead are said to sleep: therefore we wonder sometimes, that St. Chrysostom should say so: but this may be that which that holy father intended in that note, that they in the Old Testament, who are said to have slept in death, are such as then, by faith, did apprehend, and were fixed upon Christ; such as were all the good men of the Old Testament, and so there will not be many instances against St. Chrysostom's note, That to those that die in Christ, death is but a sleep; to all others, death is death, literally death. Now of this dying man, that dies in Christ, that dies the death of the righteous, that embraces death as a sleep, must we give you a picture too.

There is not a minute left to do it; not a minute's sand; Is there a minute's patience? Be pleased to remember that those pictures which are delivered in a minute, from a print upon a paper, had many days', weeks', months' time for the graving of those pictures in the copper; so this picture of that dying man, that dies in Christ, that dies the death of the righteous, that embraces death as a sleep, was graving all his life; all his public actions were the lights, and all his private the shadows of this picture. And when this picture comes to the press, this man to the straits and agonies of death, thus he lies, thus he looks, this he is. His understanding and his will is all one faculty; he understands God's purpose upon him, and he would not have God's purpose turned any other way; he sees God will dissolve him, and he would fain be dissolved, to be with Christ; his understanding and his will is all one faculty; his memory and his foresight are fixed, and concentred upon one object, upon

goodness; he remembers that he hath proceeded in the sincerity of a good conscience in all the ways of his calling, and he foresees that his good name shall have the testimony, and his posterity the support of the good men of this world; his sickness shall be but a fomentation to supple and open his body for the issuing of his soul; and his soul shall go forth, not as one that gave over his house, but as one that travelled to see and learn better architecture, and meant to return and re-edify that house, according to those better rules: and as those thoughts which possess us most awake, meet us again when we are asleep; so his holy thoughts, having been always conversant upon the directing of his family, the education of his children, the discharge of his place, the safety of the state, the happiness of the king all his life; when he is fallen asleep in death, all his dreams in that blessed sleep, all his devotions in heaven shall be upon the same subjects, and he shall solicit him that sits upon the throne, and the Lamb, God for Christ Jesus' sake, to bless all these with his particular blessings: for so God giveth his beloved sleep[24], so as that they enjoy the next world and assist this.

So then, the death of the righteous is a sleep; first, as it delivers them to a present rest. Now men sleep not well fasting; nor does a fasting conscience, a conscience that is not nourished with a testimony of having done well, come to this sleep; but *Dulcis somnus operanti*, The sleep of a labouring man is sweet[25]. To him that laboureth in his calling, even this sleep of death is welcome. *When thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid*, saith Solomon[26]; when the physician says, Sir, you must keep your bed, thou shalt not be afraid of that sick-bed; and then it follows, *And thy sleep shall be sweet unto thee;* thy sickness welcome, and thy death too; for, in those two David seems to involve all, *I will lay me down in peace, and sleep*[27]; embrace patiently my death-bed and death itself.

So then this death is a sleep, as it delivers us to a present rest; and then, lastly, it is so also as it promises a future waiting in a glorious resurrection. To the wicked it is far from both: of them God says, *I will make them drunk, and they shall sleep a*

[24] Psalm cxxvii. [25] Eccles. v. 11.
[26] Prov. iii. 24. [27] Psalm iv. 8.

perpetual sleep and not awake[28]; they shall have no part in the second resurrection. But for them that have slept in Christ, as Christ said of Lazarus, *Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may wake him out of sleep*[29], he shall say to his Father; Let me go that I may wake them who have slept so long in expectation of my coming: and *Those that sleep in Jesus Christ* (saith the apostle) *will God bring with him*[30]; not only fetch them out of the dust when he comes, but bring them with him, that is, declare that they have been in his hands ever since they departed out of this world. They shall awake as Jacob did, and say as Jacob said, *Surely the Lord is in this place, and this is no other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven*, and into that gate they shall enter, and in that house they shall dwell, where there shall be no cloud nor sun, no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light, no noise nor silence, but one equal music, no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession, no foes nor friends, but an equal communion and identity, no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity. Keep us Lord so awake in the duties of our callings, that we may thus sleep in thy peace, and wake in thy glory, and change that infallibility which thou affordest us here, to an actual and undeterminable possession of that kingdom which thy Son our Saviour Christ Jesus hath purchased for us, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. Amen.

[28] Jer. li. 39. [29] John xi. 11. [30] 1 Thess. iv. 14.

END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.